Monday, September 3, 2012 ★★ 13 sections / Vol. 27 / No. 267 P16 | Mobile Alerts: Text INQ ON BREAKING to 4467 | www.inquirer.net Twitter: @inquirerdotnet | Radyo Inquirer 990 AM Twitter: @990AM

PHILIPPINE DAILY
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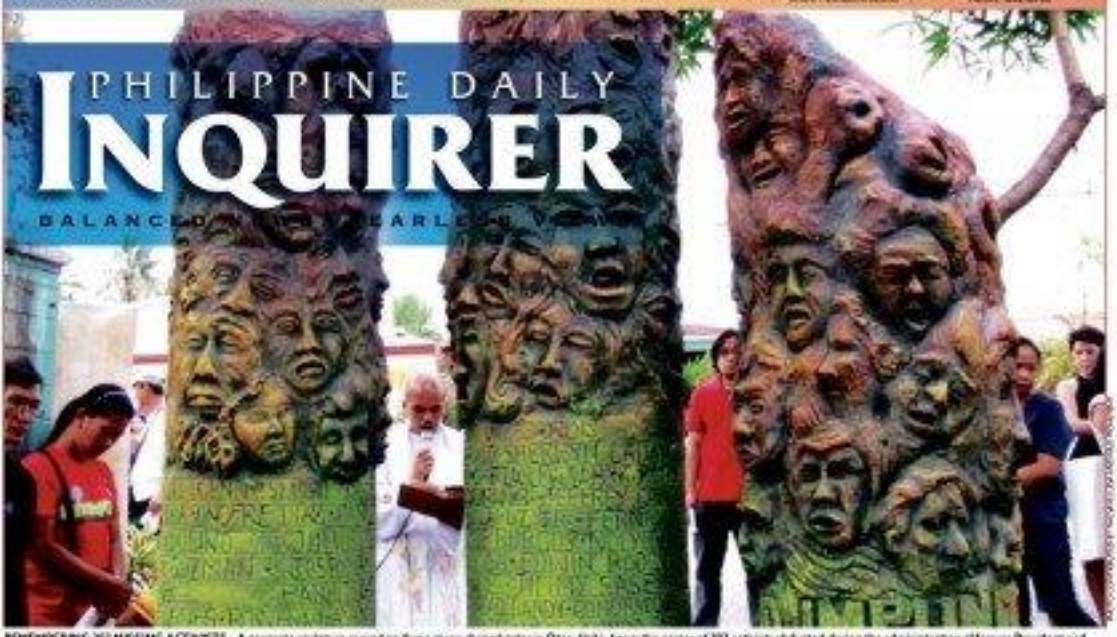


REMEMBERING 202 MISSING ACTIVISTS A concrete sculpture carved on three spear-shaped poles in Otón, Iloilo, bears the names of 202 activists abducted during the administration of former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The poles stand on the spot where activists Maria Luisa Pena Dominado and Nilo Arcadio were forcibly taken on April 12, 2007. (See story in Across the Nation, Page A16.)

Samar folk defy order to leave tsunami zone

'We have nowhere else to go; we're rebuilding here'

PEACE MONTH Children from different schools form a giant peace sign on a football field at Philippine Sports Arena in Pasig City on Sunday to kick off the 9th National Peace Consciousness Month.

By Leila B. Salaverria and Marlon Ramos

FAMILIES returned to their quake-devastated homes in Eastern Samar yesterday, ignoring government warnings to relocate away from danger zones.

A politician saw the streams of people going back to their villages as a return to normalcy, and said it was a good time for local governments to step up efforts to relocate families living in the many danger zones in the province.

"We still need to enhance [safety precautions]. There are many places here [that have been] declared hazard areas, but the people have not relocated," said Eastern Samar Rep. Ben Evardone.

He knew why, and so did the local governments.

"We have no other site to go, that is why we are trying to rebuild here," Agatos Francisco Pesase quoted Raoel Arnaiz, 26, a resident of General MacArthur town, as saying to explain why she and her family returned after Friday night's 7.6-magnitude earthquake destroyed their home.

SAMAR / A12

BAM AQUINO

Bam: I can serve PH better as senator

By Erika Sauler

HE HELPED turn some of the ubiquitous rare-earth stones into solar power stations, and domestic remittance and photo printing centers, by providing support and access to microfinance. He used to run a training center for out-of-school youths and served as chair of the National Youth Commission.

This experience in social enterprise and the youth sector is what Paolo Benigno "Bam" Aquino IV, first cousin of President Aquino, is citing as he seeks a Senate seat in the 2013 elections.

"You might think it naïve, but by being in the Senate, I can help push for

BAM AQUINO / A11

Will Mar have full control of DILG?

By Amanda Dancella

ANALYSIS

THE APPOINTMENT of Manuel "Mar" Roxas II as secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) to replace the ill-fated (and somewhat overrated) Jesse Robredo signaled the biggest Cabinet shake-up of President Aquino's administration since he took office in June 2010.

It not only upgraded the status and power of Roxas in the

WILL MAR / A21

Sorry, but Phivolcs is not on Twitter

By DJ Yap

FOR NETIZENS who wanted quick information about Friday's earthquake, it was a night of frustration of seismic proportions.

After a 7.6-magnitude earthquake

SORRY / A12

Inquirer joins Pulse Catalog

EAST OF the free Pulse mobile news app for the iPhone, iPad and Android devices? You now have a new site to add to your feeds.

The Inquirer is now on the Pulse Catalog, along with the New Yorker, Slate, Salon, The Wall Street Journal and other major US news titles.

The Pulse Catalog is one of the top mobile applications for news reading on tablets and other mobile devices. It is one of 50 applications in the Apple App Store Hall of Fame and was named one of Time's top 50

INQ [illegible] / A11

Vegetable seller is a philanthropist

By Jocelyn R. Uy

EVERY DAY for the past four decades, 69-year-old Chen Shu-Jin wakes up at 2:30 a.m. to set up her stall at the busy central market in Taitung, a county in eastern Taiwan. With her fresh farm produce—about a hundred varieties of vegetables—towering over her, she works until dark.

After a backbreaking day at the market, Chen returns to her modest home and listens to Buddhist teachings on the radio before putting some sheaves.

By living a Spartan lifestyle, Chen has been able through the years to give away some

VEGETABLE / A15

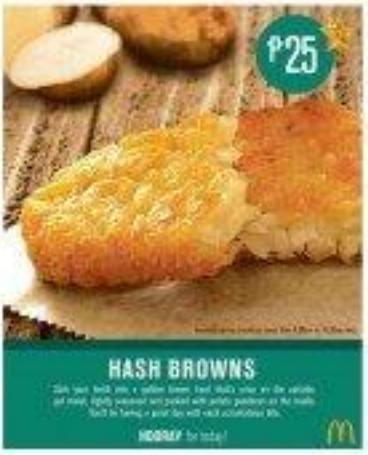
MVP, Ayala eye MRT takeover

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE METRO Pacific and Ayala groups have jointly submitted to the government an unsolicited proposal to rehabilitate and upgrade Metro Rail Transit Line 3 (MRT), the Philippines' busiest elevated railway that runs along Edsa.

The Manuel V. Pangilinan-led infrastructure holding firm, Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC), and conglomerate Ayala Corp.—which earlier this year formed an "exclusive" alliance to pursue Light Rail Transit (LRT) projects in greater Metro Manila—submitted the new MRT3 proposal to the Department of

MVP, AYALA / A21



NATION
Grenade blast hurts 37 in circus show / A16

WORLD
'Raindrops Keep Fallin' lyricist Hal David dies at 91 / A30

LEARNING
National Teachers' Month calendar of events / G1

ENTERTAINMENT
On her birthday, Amalia kisses, makes up with Liezl / E1

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

PCSO Previous

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SUPER LOTTO 6/49

7 8 6 5 6 9

SUPER LOTTO 6/42

2 2 6

SUPER LOTTO 6/49

14 17 22 36 46 47

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Expect long RH debate in Senate–JPE

By Cathy Yamsuan

PROPONENTS of the reproductive health (RH) bill in the Senate should brace themselves for a lengthy debate on every amendment that some opposing senators may want to introduce into the controversial measure.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile gave the warning yesterday, and followers of the debate took it as a hint that the Senate would finally be moving forward and open the bill up to sponsorship once Majority Leader Vicente Sotto is through with his series of speeches against the proposal.

In a radio interview, Enrile said the period of amendments "would last depending on the number of amendments that we have."

Enrile hinted he is studying an amendment that would delete a provision that classifies contraceptives as "essential medicines."

He has argued consistently that artificial methods of pregnancy prevention such as condoms and IUDs do not deal with any life-threatening diseases and should not be listed as essential medicine in the government formulary.

Sotto has said that the current form of the RH bill, to be approved, must withstand changes in provisions relating to abortion, the definition of population control, and government involvement in the distribution of contraceptives.

"If we cannot agree on a single amendment, we will put to a vote the many subscribers to our right to sex," Enrile said. "The length of debate would [depend] on the number of amendments." If an amendment is debatable, expect [a debate]."

"We have to prepare for this ending [It's really like three] more days in the week [sensitive] bill that has caused the ire of this nation," Enrile said to Filipinos.

He said the debate could stretch until after next year's election. Under Congress' calendar, the current session will end on February to give way to the 2013 campaign period that would culminate in the elections in May.

Enrile said Congress would return in June.

"When we come back in June, we will try [to finish the] ," he added.

"We are not going to delay but we also have the right to present our amendments unless they want us, if they can vote us out and cut short the period [of amendments] and go to voting immediately," Enrile said.

The RH bill appears to be the most divisive measure awaiting senation in the 15th Congress. Disagreements center on whether the government should officially support artificial methods of contraception.

The Catholic Church, which opposes contraceptive use, and militant pro-natural methods of avoiding pregnancy, is leading the opposition to the bill.

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LPA could turn into storm, warns Pagasa

THE LOW pressure area (LPA) initially detected off eastern Samar and moving southward may develop into a tropical depression as it continues to gain strength, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said yesterday.

The weather bureau said the LPA was expected to enhance the "habagat" (southwest monsoon) and bring widespread rains and thunderstorms over southern Luzon, particularly Bicol, Leyte, and Visayan provinces. The areas could experience flash floods and landslides, it warned.

As of 2 p.m. yesterday, satellite and radiar data of the weather bureau showed that the LPA was 510 kilometers east of Virac, Catanduanes.

In its forecast, Pagasa said Central Luzon, Eastern Visayas and Mindanao would experience [illegible] cloudy skies with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms.

Other parts of the country, including Metro Manila, are expected to have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms.

Weather forecaster Adrian Aurelio told the Inquirer that as long as the LPA remained over the ocean, it would not strengthen and could develop into a tropical depression. Antonette L. Acabado

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Binay: PH ready to evacuate Pinoys if Iran attacked

By Jovanie Aning

CONTINGENCY plans are in place to evacuate more than 3,000 Filipinos in Iran in case an escalation of tensions between the United States and Iran over the latter's nuclear program would result in an attack on the Persian country, Vice President Jejomar Binay said yesterday.

Speaking to reporters at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport after arriving from the 16th Non-Aligned Movement Summit held in the Iranian capital Tehran, Binay said he was briefed on the contingency plans by Philippine charge d'affaires Mariano Dania.

"Before meeting with the Philippine foreign community at the embassy, I was given a full briefing by Dania on the plans that had been put in place in case the well-publicized threat to attack the nuclear plants of Iran comes to pass," Binay said.

"The embassy is hoping the plans will never have to be implemented, but in case it becomes necessary the embassy is prepared to carry them out to protect the security and safety of the more than 3,000 Filipinos in Iran," he added.

Binay, who is also the presidential adviser on OFW affairs, said that although he would not discuss details, he expressed confidence the plans would work.

"We cannot discuss the details of the plans, but I feel confident that they would work despite the skeleton force at the Philippine Embassy in Tehran on Iran's order. Dania and his colleagues," he said.

The United States and Israel are said to have plans in place to attack Iran's nuclear sites if necessary to prevent it from developing nuclear weapons. The US, Israel and their allies believe Iran is secretly developing nuclear weapons, although Tehran has consistently maintained that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, such as energy production.

On Aug. 1, US Defense Secretary Leon Panetta while in Israel said that the US had serious "options," including military options, to prevent Iran from building a nuclear weapon should diplomacy fail.

The International Atomic Energy Agency based in Vienna, Austria, reported on Aug. 31 that Iran had been a "major opponent" of Israel's nuclear reinforcement activities.

Binay also said he had "substantive talks" with Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi during the last day of the Ninth-day conference and discussed the possibility of increasing Iran's imports of Philippine bananas. He also urged them to invest in the Philippines.

"We agreed to encourage our respective members of economics to pursue the various ways and means of engaging in expanding the economies and trade. Officers and members of the Iranian Chamber of Commerce may be coming to the Philippines soon," Binay said.

The Vice President also said he was glad that "reciprocal honor" by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of presiding over "a great part of the morning session" after he (Binay) delivered his address to the conference.

Sereno to lead 1st JBC meet

THE JUDICIAL and Bar Council (JBC), to be presided over for the first time by new Chief Justice Ma. Lourdes Sereno, will meet today to tackle vacancies in the courts, possibly including the nomination of justice into the recently created.

It will be the first time the eight-member JBC is meeting after it vanished because a replacement be named Chief Justice Renato Corona.

Today's meeting will see the return to the council of Justice Secretary Leila de Lima, who was included in the list of candidates for the top Supreme Court post.

De Lima, who represents the executive branch in the JBC, took a leave during the council's proceedings.

Eva stationed the vacant last week, Sereno appealed for "patience" as the tackled administrative matters in the high court, including court vacancies.

"We will be announcing the priorities and target schedule for the filling of the vacancies as soon as the JBC meets Tuesday," De Lima said.

Jose Mejia, who represents the academe in the JBC, said the meeting today had been set before President Aquino announced the appointment of Sereno as Chief Justice.

"The agenda had been earlier set by the council to discuss the vacancies in the lower courts and the position of associate justice in the Supreme Court," Mejia said in a phone interview.

Dharlene O. Avendaño

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Former Kalinga-Apayao Rep. Almazan; 88

FORMER Rep. Felipe S. Almazan of Kalinga-Apayao, also a retired Regional Trial Court judge, died on Sept. 1. He was 88.

He is survived by his wife Irene; children Manuel, Felipe Jr., Celia, Dante, Leonila, Romeo, Ma. Soledad and Maribel; brother Amado; sisters Guadalupe, Anita and Elsa; grandchildren and other relatives.

His remains lie at Heaven of Angels Memorial Chapels on Sumulong Highway, Antipolo City. Interment is on Sept. 6 after the 10 a.m. Mass at the National Shrine of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in San Antonio Village, Makati City.

Only true believers will be in LP slate, says Roxas

By TJBerganio

POLITICKER aspiring for reelection in the Liberal Party's senatorial lineup have had to go through a tough screening process Interior Secretary Manuel "Mar" Roxas II, Liberal Party president, told reporters in Malacañang on Friday.

Roxas said the senatorial aspirants should share the President's personal belief that the people are their "boss," and in his advocacy of transparency, accountable governance.

Roxas declined to say whether endorsement sources were through the same process.

He said the finalization of the LP slate for next year's midterm elections was accelerated by the death of late Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo.

"The past two weeks, our attention has been focused on the search and rescue and recovery operations for Secretary Robredo. Next week we will resume our work to present a line-up that the President will be proud of. That's the lineup now," he said.

A few weeks ago, Sen. Aquino said the LP senatorial slate had been finalized except for the 5th slot, admitting that the number of aspirants exceeded the 12 slots available.

"We're in a position, on the subject of risks is who gets the final slot," Sen. Aquino had said on Aug. 17. That early, he said he had begun preparing an

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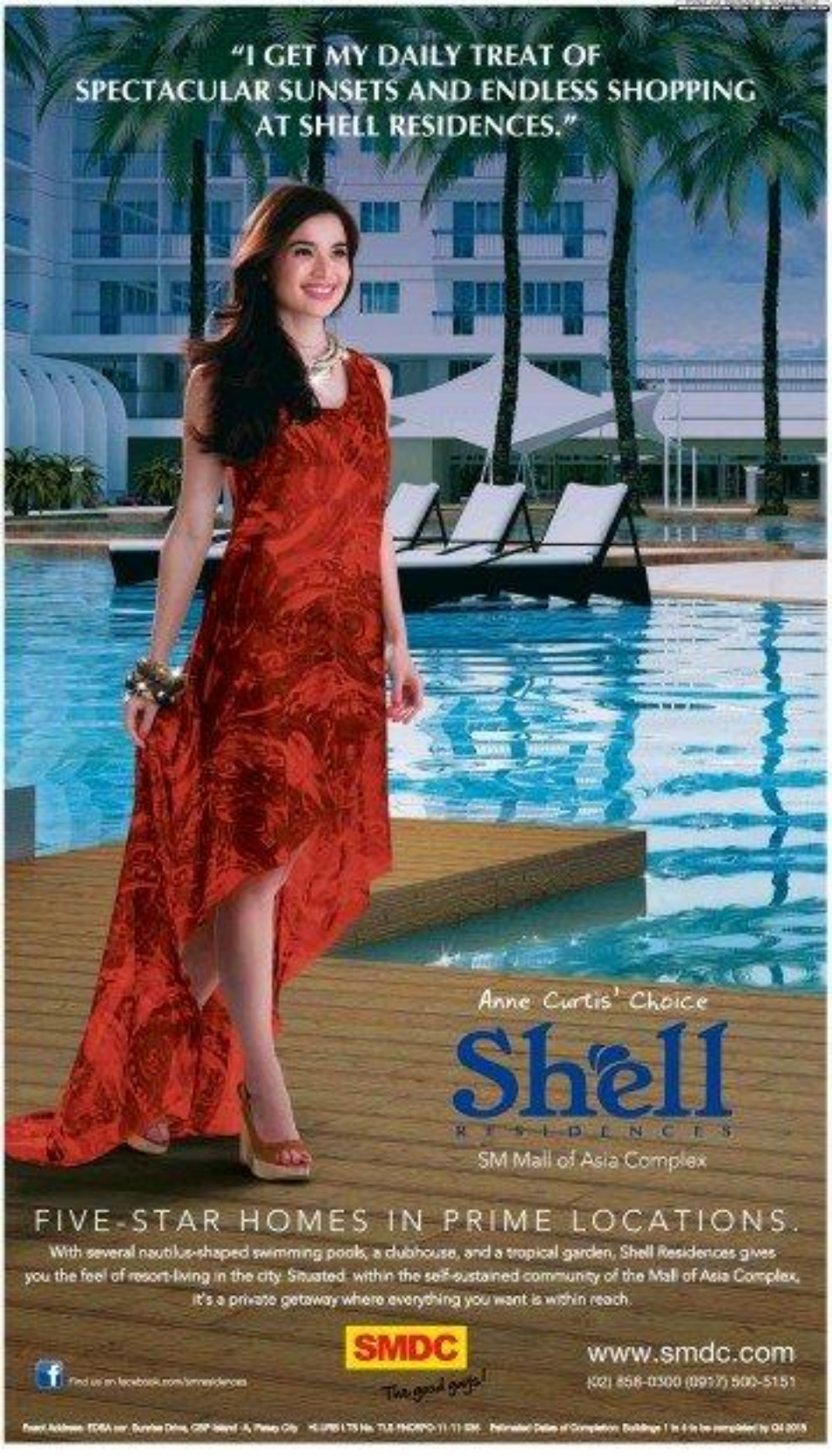
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Police find arms cache in lawyer's Taytay home

By Madaris Ramos

A LAWYER long wanted for a string of criminal cases, including several notable acquittals, was arrested over the weekend by agents of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) for allegedly keeping a cache of undeclared firearms.

CIDG chief Director Nestorio Pagdilao Jr. said Patrick Cayetano was arrested in a raid of his house in 40 Valley View Aves., Valley View Royale Subdivision, Taytay, Rizal, at about 11 p.m. on Saturday.

Supt. Danilo Macerin, deputy chief of the CIDG's National Capital Region office, said Cayetano had been recently arrested in another house in nearby Cainta town in connection with two robberies.

"But he was able to get out of jail by posting bail. We then conducted surveillance after we got reports that he and his security escorts were carrying loose firearms," Macerin said during the briefing.

Macerin said the CIDG also received information that Cayetano was involved in the anomalous sale of a 97-million peso property in Pasay City and had been ordered arrested by several courts for violation of the anti-bouncing checks law.

"We still continue doing a background check on [Cayetano] to see if he had other arrest warrants," he added.

The CIDG said it was also looking into reports that Cayetano had used the identity of his younger brother to enter law school, pass the bar and practice as a lawyer.

Pagdilao said CIDG agents seized a 9-millimeter pistol, an armscor .38-cal revolver, a Steyr-manufactured grenade and assorted ammunition during the raid.

The CIDG chief said the walking cane also covered four other arms with Cayetano in the house, among them a Victor S. Rolarto, who had an arrest order from a Tagaytay City Regional Trial Court for murder.

The Community Investigative Support (CIS) provided assistance to the CIDG's campaign against unlicensed firearms.

"As the CIDG hit, file its task is to ensure peaceful elections next year, we welcome the efforts of the CIS in helping us meet this mandate," said Pagdilao in a statement.

Pagdilao, meanwhile, said CIDG operatives in Region III managed down criminal elements in Pandan Subdivision, Barangay Heights, General Santos City, also on Saturday and confiscated a .45-cal. pistol, a Squilabasan .22-cal. rifle, and a Smith and Wesson .38-cal. revolver.

"Initial investigation showed the suspect had links to a group operating in the region," the CIDG chief said.

Red Cross lauds telco

SMART Communications Inc. has again been acknowledged by the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) as one of its leading partners in its nationwide blood drive.

At a recent Blood Donors Recognition Ceremony in Manila, during the observance of Blood Donors Month, the PRC presented a plaque of appreciation to Smart.

"We are thankful to the Red Cross and proud to be its partner. We also acknowledge its sensitivities, particularly to no discrimination and response efforts," said Ruben S. Flores, Smart's senior manager for community partnerships.

Smart has set up a text-based service where subscribers can send donations via text-clicking subscribers only need to text PRC <amount> to 4143. Valid donation amounts are P50, P25, P99, P1,00,P500, P999 and P1,000.

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Japan to PH: Do you want Coast Guard ships or not?

By Jerry E. Esplanada

SAYING that "the ball is in the Philippines' court," Japan has reminded the region to provide the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) with 12 brand new patrol boats it had yet to officially take off.

In a text message to the Inquirer, the Japanese Embassy-attached Japan Information and Culture Center (JICC) said over the weekend that "the status [of the aid program] has not changed."

"It remains a plan since we have not yet received any official request from the Philippine side," said the JICC, which added, "Please contact the Japan Coast Guard."

Transportation and Communications Secretary Manuel Roxas II said: "We, the DOTC, and the Coast Guard are working with the Japanese government and with the Department of Foreign Affairs on this."

"I understand the DFA is already requesting formally [for the boats]," Roxas had told the Inquirer.

For its part, the DFA said "the plan of Japan to provide patrol boats to our Coast Guard has already been approved by the Media."

"We will formally inform the Japanese authorities as soon as possible," said Raul Hernandez, the DFA spokesperson.

Minister Shinsuke Shimizu, head of the Japanese Embassy's chancery, said in an earlier interview that under the decades-old and stripped-down ODA the Philippines has been getting from the United States, the patrol boats the PCG will get from Japan will be brand new.

Japan, he said, "has yet to decide which of the vessels will be built and manufactured in the Philippine government-owned shipbuilding and repair facility."

He pointed out that "since 2005, Japan has been helping the Coast Guard in its capacity building programs."

Fourteen years ago, Tokyo gave Manila a marine accident engineer and heavy weather diagnostic equipment, but the agency turned down that the Philippines has been getting from the United States, the patrol boats the PCG will get from Japan will be brand new.

PDEA to pols: Leave us out

MORE or less dirty politics, please.

That's the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) yesterday asked politicians not to use the name of the anticorruption agency to advance their political interests by spreading false drug information and "malignant reports" against their rivals.

In a statement, PDEA chief Undersecretary Gen Gustavo At said the agency and its agents would "remain apolitical" following reports that some politicians would try to use it in the run-up to the 2013 midterm elections.

"PDEA will not allow itself to be used for politicking," he said, adding that the agency "will continue its fight against illegal drugs without fear or favor."

At list an PDEA is constituted ... no such list do our pols. We validate the information we receive as part of the ongoing process. We don't [just] jump to conclusions, he said.

He vehemently denied reports that some senior PDEA officials had received P5 million each from publishing tycoon Jaime Ongpin to perpetually collect intelligence information linking Tagaytay City Rep. Freddie Tinga and his family to the illegal drug trade.

"We will not allow ourselves to be used. Our work is to validate all information coming to us and build up the case against (personalities involved in illegal drugs)," he said.

Tinga, a former mayor of Tagaytay, had sought PDEA help to look into what he described as a series of attempts by some individuals to again connect him to illegal drug syndicates.

Unionist, however, described the accusations as "pure speculation and completely without basis."

"We are not involved in any kind of agreement with personal personalities just to pin down their rivals. There's no such thing," he said.

In 2011, Tinga and his father, former Supreme Court Associate Justice Dante Tinga, were accused by PDEA intelligence agent Jeffrey Ibuganos of influencing a Pasig City Regional Trial Court judge, who threw out the drug case filed against two of the Tinga relatives allegedly using bribe illegal drugs.

Dante Tinga branded all the allegations and filed a libel case against Ibuganos. (Marlon Ramos)

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Inq joins Pulse Catalog

From page A1

iPhone apps in 2011), according to the app's website, Pulse.me.

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From the summaries, a Pulse reader can read Full stories on either the mobile or desktop versions of Inquirer.net. A reader may also download the Inquirer's own mobile app and subscribe to view the Full content of the Inquirer Group's 60 newspapers, magazines and e-books. If the subscribers have complimentary digital access to their subscriptions on Inquirer mobile apps).

"We view the Pulse Catalog as something akin to a 'discovery engine' for our content, a way of introducing that content to digital users who may not be familiar with it," said JV Bañas, Inquirer mobile director, who coordinated the development of the feed with the Inquirer.net development team and the Pulse Catalog.

The Pulse feed is just one of many mobile platform initiatives undertaken by the Inquirer Group.

In addition to the Pulse Catalog, the Inquirer Group has a mobile website (m.inquirer.net) and a suite of mobile apps for Apple iOS, Android, Windows7, and the BlackBerry Playbook (http://www.inquirer.net/apps).

Moreover, the Inquirer Group's main title, Philippine Daily Inquirer, is also available as Kindle periodical on the Amazon Kindle line of e-readers (http://amzn.to/gFQ8eV). Several Inquirer e-books are also available on the Kindle; go to http://www.inquirer.net/store to view available titles.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday / September 3, 2012
22nd Week in Ordinary Time
Gregory the Great

1st Reading: 1 Cor 2:1-5

When I came to reveal to you the mystery of God, what I did not come on eloquence or on a show of learning. I was determined to know nothing among you but Jesus, the Messiah, and a crucified Messiah. I myself came weak, fearful and trembling, my words and preaching were not fortified or clever to win listeners. It was, rather, a demonstration of spirit and power, so that your faith might be a matter, not of human wisdom, but of God's power.

Gospel: Luke 4:16-30

When Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath as he usually did. He stood up to read and they handed him the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Going then, unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, and new sight to the blind, to free the oppressed and announce the Lord's year of favor."

Jesus then rolled up the scroll, gave it to the attendant and sat down, while the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he said to them, "Today these prophetic words come true even as you listen."

All agreed with him and were full of wonder while he kept on speaking of the grace of God. Nevertheless they asked, "Who is this but Joseph's son?" So he said, "Doubtless you will quote me the saying, 'Doctor, heal yourself.' Or, 'Here in your own world does my son did in Capernaum.'"

Jesus added, "No prophet is honored in his own country. Truly, I say to you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens withheld rain for three years and six months and a great famine came over the whole land. Yet Elijah was sent to no one of these, but to a widow in Zarephath, in the district of Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha, the prophet, and not one was healed except Naaman, the Syrian."

On hearing these words, the whole assembly became indignant. They rose up and brought him out of the town, to the edge of the hill on which the town was built, intending to throw him down over the cliff. But he passed through the midst and went his way.

Reflection

They liked him well while he spoke sweet words to them, but the moment he began to mirror their problems, they became angry. It is not so with us. We even like to hear condemnations, provided they are not about us—or about me. I heard a preacher in Ireland who was trying valiantly to point his message straight at each individual in the congregation. "I'm talking to you," he said. "not the person behind you, not the person on your left or on your right, not the others, but you, you, you!" After the Mass one neighbor said to another: "Mary, I wonder was she talking to the fellow that thumps me every Sunday?"

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Jazz through years at UP

THE UP Jazz Ensemble Concert will be held on Sept. 6 at 6:30 p.m. at Abelardo Hall, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City. Ticket prices are at P200.

The Eyedoc Big Jazz Ensemble of the UP began supporting the Big Band trend in the 1970s. With the first concert staged in 1993, called "Jazz One" at the Quezon Hall shaped UP Diliman, various big band settings headed by maestro Angel Peña, Lito Molina, Tony Velarde, and Harding and Priscilla "the Holy Jazz Goddesses" Antonio was wowed audiences.

The yearly repertoire concert ended in 1976 with the Jazz on the Rocks concert, which featured the birth of the UP Jazz Ensemble headed by pianist-educator Fred Dalisay.

Upon his retirement in 1998, Dalisay passed the baton to professor Raphie Rodgers, his long time assistant. For many years, Rodgers entertained with the Big Band tradition as a composer/arranger, however he became the ensemble consisted of students from the conservatory.

The ensemble's repertoire contained compositions written by Filipinos, until 2002, when Jazz pianist-composer Angel Peña forged an alliance with jazz musician and writer Bobbi Quirino and Magpie to include original compound and arranged by Filipinos.

Five major productions were staged from 2002 onwards, with Dr. Bi's works dominating the repertoire. The concerts included pieces by Quirino, Sonning Salvio, Freddie Kaufman, Boy Palacio and the late Bobby Enriquez.

At Thursday's presentation, aside from the composers mentioned, the works of Willy Nind, Mon Calingasan and Jun Palacio will also be featured.

Through the show, jazz should know and experience the varied influences on jazz from its inception, from the blues to swing, to bop to Latin jazz, baroque jazz to avant-garde jazz, ethnic or world jazz, fusion, and smooth or pop jazz—which show that jazz is omnipresent evolving.

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Vegetable seller is philanthropist

From page A1

NT$7 million (US$239,000) out of her modest earnings to various charities engaged in early childhood care and children's education.

Chen's tremendous generosity has been emulated internationally. She has been acclaimed as an inspiration and a role model, traveled to many places, walked the red carpet and met VIPs, like Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou and Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin.

'Just a vegetable seller'

On Friday, Chen accepted the Ramon Magsaysay award, conferred on people who address issues of human development in Asia with courage and creativity and make contributions that have transformed their societies for the better.

Chen and the five other laureates for 2012 received their awards in ceremonies at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City.

But the unassuming Chen remains mild-hearted to the accolades she has received for her philanthropy since she was first featured in a local paper two years ago, maintaining that she's just an ordinary vegetable seller.

As much as possible, she doesn't want to be away too long from her market stall, which she took over after her father died some 20 years ago.

"I don't feel like I'm a hero or a great person whatsoever because I don't feel like I've done much. I just feel like I'm still that regular reader at the market," Chen said, speaking through a translator.

Pure altruism

But to others, especially those who have been touched by her unselfishness, she has done great things worthy of emulation and praise.

In electing Chen to receive this year's prize, the Ramon Magsaysay Foundation said it "recognizes the pure altruism of her giving, which reflects a deep, consistent, quiet compassion, and her steadfastness in the face of the numerous literacies the last two Hobbs helped."

Over the past two decades, she has donated almost all her personal earnings to a Buddhist monastery, Ci-Cheng Shan, to enable it to finance a school, and to set up orphanages. Tzu Chi Foundation, a Chinese mission devoted to the rescue of orphans and vulnerable children, to provide them with food and education and see to their spiritual and emotional needs.

Through her donations to her alma mater, Beitou Elementary School, she has also helped finance the establishment of a fully-equipped library.

Live a simple life

But how can one simple vegetable seller, who makes marginal profits, give so much to others?

For Chen, the answer is simple: Live only on the most basic things.

She said that NT$100 (about US$3) was all she needed every day for food and other necessities. The rest, she gives away.

"If you keep too much money in your pocket, you get a lot of temptations to spend it [on things you don't need]," she said with enthusiasm.

Even before receiving the $50,000 cash prize that came with the Ramon Magsaysay awardwinner and a medallion bearing the likeness of the late Philippine President, she has already donated to donate the prize money to a general hospital in Taitung for the construction of an intensive care unit.

Upon her return to her country, she will personally make the donation in Taipei, where the main branch of Buddhist Tzu Chi General Hospital is located. It is the only tertiary teaching hospital in Taitung.

An early life lesson

As the eldest daughter of vegetable vendors who worked hard to put food on the table for a family of eight, Chen learned the value of perseverance and self-denial early in life.

She was 13 years old when she came face to face with what it meant to have to hide in life.

In 1961, her mother developed complications from a pregnancy that sent her Sydney desperately knocking on neighbors' doors for money for her treatment. Whatever her father was able to raise was not enough to save her mother.

After her mother's death, Chen had to stop schooling to help her father sell vegetables at the market. She had just finished Grade 6 then.

"At that time, I felt like people looked down on the poor and that money was very important and I very much so I felt I must do everything I can to earn more money," she said.

With his brothers and sisters to help support, she didn't hesitate to give up her education.

Unexpected act of generosity

"I didn't really think about myself at the time. All I knew was I had to help out in every way I could in order to provide for my family because I had a lot of younger brothers and sisters that I needed to provide for," said Chen, who has never married.

Five years later, another tragedy struck the family. One of her younger brothers caught a disease that depleted even more the household's meager resources. The family could not afford to pay for the brother's medical aids.

Having learned about the plight of Chen's family through a local newspaper, her teachers and classmates at her old school initiated a fund drive to help with her brother's medical treatment. But the treatment was just too costly. The donations failed to save her brother's life.

Chen Kenju chose to bet heart that unexpected act of generosity shown by her teachers and classmates. He drew strength and inspiration everyday from that episode in her life.

"It's because I received help when I was young so now I always think about others before I think about [myself]," she said.

CHEN

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Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Across the NATION

Davao businessmen hail public-private partnership measure

DAVAO CITY—The city's business community hailed as the country's first in favor of transparency in governance the newly approved public-private partnership (PPP) ordinance.

"The PPP ordinance will promote the practice of transparency," Ms. Lourdes Monteverde, president of the Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCCI), said during the group's general membership meeting here on Friday.

Lim said the PPP ordinance would also fast-track growth and development in the city.

The ordinance, passed by the city council on Aug. 23, also created the PPP board, which will review and recommend for approval development projects proposed in the city.

The PPP board consists of the city mayor as chair, the vice mayor as co-chair, private sector representatives, heads of relevant committees of the city council, heads of relevant city government offices, and the regional director for Southern Mindanao of the National Economic Development Authority.

Under the ordinance, the city council will take charge of approving projects that cost P100 million and below.

Proposed projects in excess of P100 million had to pass through the Investment Coordination Committee of the National Economic Development Authority, Monteverde said.

Jody Quirez, Inquirer Mindanao

Grenade blast hurts 37 during circus

CHAINSAW Lamang, 13, one of those wounded in the grenade blast, still wearing her bloodied shirt

DAVAO CITY—At least 37 people were injured when a grenade exploded during a small circus in a remote village here on Saturday night.

City police chief Senior Supt. Ronald dela Rosa said chefs in navigation revealed that the suspect's target was an Army detachment, but the grenade hit a "net barrier" and landed on a crowd of villagers watching a circus inside a gymnasium in Barangay Paitan in Pegalungan. Dalisay at about 8 p.m.

The gathering was a weekend entertainment for villagers prior to the barangay fiesta.

Some of those injured were brought to Davao City to Davao del Norte and to Southern Philippine Medical Center hospital (SPMC) here.

Chairmaine Lamang, 13, said she was watching the show when she heard a loud explosion.

"The blast was so loud that I was temporarily disoriented and could see but not hear anything. I was thrown by the explosion," Lamang narrated in her hospital bed at SPMC.

When she gained consciousness, she found that she was hurt and bloodied.

"I started running toward the exit of the circus. It was chaotic. Everyone was running from almost every direction," Lamang, who suffered shrapnel wounds on her back, added.

Lamang's sister Regine, 17, was also wounded in the back, stomach and left leg but was immediately released to go home after receiving medical attention.

"The doctor said that I should stay here in the hospital because the shrapnel are still in my body and may have injured my lungs," the younger Lamang said.

Pegalungan Diorio, a senior part of the city, is a known hotbed of communist guerrillas.

The police were investigating the motive and identity of the grenade thrower, both Rosa told the Inquirer. *Dennis Jay Santos and Rachel Blanchaflor, Inquirer Mindanao*

Flood damage to crops in Laguna totals ₱410M

By Rowena O. Pasion
Inquirer Southern Luzon

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—The southwest monsoon rains (habagat) which spawned flooding that submerged low-lying villages in 14 towns and cities in Laguna province destroyed P410.5 million worth of agricultural products.

The damaged crops were planted in about 12,000 hectares of inundated farmlands, planted with rice, corn and crops, and affected some 8,000 farmers, according to a report released on Wednesday by Jeanette T. Samson, officer in charge of the Office of the Agriculturist (OPA) in Laguna.

Damage

The OPA's damage assessment report said that as of Aug. 28, the loss in rice production amounted to 28,444 metric tons, valued at P277,341,225, involving 10,263.99 ha of planted land area and affecting 5,146 farmers.

The damage to corn production has amounted to 10,000,350, involving 111.4 ha and affecting 178 farmers.

The crop damage, including those destroyed by Typhoon "Gener," which came shortly before the Habagat-induced floods, or for a period from July 26 to Aug. 8, amounted to P26,792,750, affecting 1,108 farmers and covering 457 ha of lands planted to vegetables, root crops, fruit-bearing trees like rambutan and bananas.

Still flooded

The Laguna agriculturist's report said the areas still submerged under water were low-lying villages of the towns of Bay, Biñan, Alaminos, Siniloan, Pangil, Pakil, Paete, Kalayaan, Lumban, Pagsanjan, Sta. Cruz, Pila, Victoria, Los Baños, Bay and San Pedro, and the cities of Calamba, Calamba, Sta. Rosa and Biñan.

Rex Palacol, OPA's administrative officer, told the Inquirer that the Habagat flooding also inundated their newly planted experimental rice farm, reserved by the province of the canal posts (Gold ex Kubol) that fed on developing stems and leaves of the plants.

The total land area of the experimental farm, including their office areas, damaged by the flood was 7 ha located in Barangay Calios in Sta. Cruz town, he said.

Fortunately, the nursery where seedlings of mango, rambutan and other fruit trees are ready for distribution to qualified farmers has not been affected.

Palacol added that the OPA is providing village Bayanihan to interested fishpond owners at minimal cost.

THE WATER LILIES have locally cultivated pink lotus field in Lumban town, Laguna.

Friends, kin put up sculpture for missing Iloilo activists

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—Families and friends of missing activists have erected a concrete sculpture in Dicos town in Iloilo where missing activists Maria Luisa Ross-Dominado and Nilo Aradio were abducted five years ago.

The sculpture, consisting of three interim 2 to 3 meters tall with a diameter of 50 centimeters each, was unveiled on Aug. 31 to mark the International Day of the Disappeared, along the national highway in Barangay Cabatuan in Dicos town, about 75 kilometers from this city.

The site is where Dominado and Aradio were waylaid and abducted by heavily armed men on April 12, 2007. They remain missing.

Their families and colleagues have blamed military agents for the abduction, pointing to the similarity with other cases in other places in the country, an allegation repeatedly denied by military officials.

Dominado was the regional spokesperson of Bayaning Mangingisda ng Iloilo for Inclusive Growth or Dinteryente sa Arrotin, an organization of former political detainees. Aradio was chair of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan for Panay Island and leader of the farmers organization Pamanggas.

Clothed around the three-spire-shaped poles are around 60 faces and the names of 202 missing activists.

"These depict the emotions of the victims and their families and also the same desire for justice. They had struggle to find them and so we reminded with Dino Gaudiño," said Dino-based sculptor Gregorio "Boy" Maralito who was commissioned to conceptualize and carve the statues.

Seven others, mostly based in Dicos, also helped in carving the statues. These were Jonie Tiles, Mark Nadera, Ray Bustamante, Cheryll Tiles, Midas Bustamante, Manny Flero and Pedro.

The sculpture, which was completed in one weeks, was painted over in black, red, orange and yellow.

Lorie Ross, Dominado's brother and spokesperson of the Save Lalay and Nilo Movement, said the sculpture not only depicted the plight of his sister and Aradio but also of the 202 victims of enforced disappearances under the administration of former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Ross said families, friends and colleagues of the missing activists raised funds to put up the markers.

But he said they had raised feelings when it was unveiled.

"It's a constant and painful reminder that our loved ones have not returned home and we still do not know if they will ever come back," Ross told the Inquirer.

But he said the families believed that the marker also symbolizes the continued hope that they would be vindicated.

"This is not just about my sister and Nilo. This is for all the victims and their families who feel the same way that we do," Ross said.

MILF clamps down on rebel activities

vantaztic!
A building across the...
Dubai's life in a can

COTABATO CITY—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has clamped down on the military activities of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement (BIFM) "in the interest of Moro civilians and the future of the peace process."

Von Al-Haq, spokesperson of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF), the MILF's armed wing, told the Inquirer their operation is to protect the movement and address disorganization of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in North Cotabato and Maguindanao from being used for one week.

The BIFF is the armed wing of the BIFM which was organized by former BIAF 105th Base commander, Ameril Umbra Kato, last August last year. This led to the latter's expulsion from the MILF.

On Aug. 3, the BIFF staged coordinated attacks targeting the armed forces of the Philippines in Maguindanao and North Cotabato. The offensives that lasted a week uprooted at least 20,000 persons from their homes and communities.

"We don't want the civilians to be disturbed by these unnecessary military actions," explained Al-Haq.

The clampdown on the BIFM, Al-Haq admitted, is part of the rebel group's "true and entire conformation" implemented in MILF-influenced communities.

He added that when the clampdown started, BIAF forces were able to suppress the attempt of BIFF to shell its offensives against the AFP from Maguindanao to North Cotabato.

"What we did was to position troops around their lairs. Our armed deployments are at least twice the forces BIFF can muster in any tactical areas," Al-Haq explained.

But he clarified that the BIAF operations against the BIFM is not undertaken in behalf or in cooperation with AFP troops through the Ad-Hoc Joint Action Group (AHJAG).

"The AFP did not invoke the AHJAG mechanism to pursue the BIFF elements," he stressed. "But we coordinated our troop movements with the government's contingent in the joint coordinating committee," Al-Haq added.

The BIFF is holed up in a portion of the MILF's Camp Omar in the hills of Datu Salibangsa town of Maguindanao. Through some pockets of town supporters in Datu Piang and Mamasapano towns, it is able to mobilize forces in North Cotabato across the other side of the Liguasan Marsh.

A week after the clampdown started, Al-Haq said the BIFF leaders have engaged the BIAF leadership in a dialogue "promoting the leadership of the BIAF general staff not to consider the initial results of the dialogue," Al-Haq said. —Ryan D. Rosauro, Inquirer Mindanao

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Worker gets award, cash from ARMM

COTABATO CITY—A 79-year-old man was named as the "Father of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), besting over 40,000 other employees of the regional bureaucracy.

Rado Ibanal, who was having age-related hearing problems, was awarded a cash incentive of ₱50,000 in proper, to hold it on to serve as an encouragement for "lifetime achievement." For keeping the ARMM capital grounds here clean and green for over 20 years.

He also received a ₱50,000 cash reward from contributions raised by regional officials led by ARMM Acting Gov. Mujib Hataman.

The last exemplary service through exceptional feats of above level work, the present administration hereby recognizes his contributions in the field of public and civil service," reads the certificate of appreciation in Filipino that Hataman and top officials of the ARMM government handed over to Ibanal.

Hataman said he wanted all ARMM employees and officials to emulate the honesty and hard work that Ibanal and 21 other utility persons-awardees have shown in the name of public service.

Ibanal was seen caught in a photo sweeping part of the 26-hectare capital ground during a brief visit.

Facebook

Myrna Austria Henry, a senior employee of the ARMM's Bureau of Public Information, took the photo and posted it on her Facebook.

The Facebook photo of Ibanal by Henry spread fast among residents and officials, including Hataman.

Reacting the amazing comments, Ibanal, who only speaks Maguindanaon, repeatedly said "salamat" and "makasi" (thanks for "Bisaya").

Ibanal said he keeps his family's and relatives's continues by working with a "job-order" appointment which entitles him to up to ₱9,000 monthly wage.

He said he could not retire even at his age, but his (office) frugated body aches and that he would have nothing to reap in terms of retirement benefits.

Meanwhile, housing or government insurance policy entitlements are not declared by government or private workers on "job-contract" appointments, said administrative officer Jane Delaey.

From his meanings, sticking with ₱15 daily wage, Ibanal had sent to school his own adult and married children, and is still helping their school expenses for his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

He said the ₱50,000 cash reward was a big help to his family.

Assemblypersons, including Speaker Nasser Mitmug Jr. of the ARMM Regional Legislative Assembly, joined Hataman in paying tribute to the region's 22 workers, who were also given awards recognizing their labors.

Most of the awardees have worked on their job during the past 20 to 30 years from the ranks of ARMM's bureaucracy.

He appealed to workers, officials and members of the organized regional to exercise circumspection and to help keep the capital grounds clean by refraining from littering. —Roel Pareño

Hataman vowed that the ARMM government would also give cluster "awards" to the listening officials and employees.

Aside from Ibanal, other awards recipients were Marcelina Gumacchara, Bonnie Manuel, Jasper Villarosa, Hanil Saco, Guimad Mashaka, Saidee Zaha, Abdul-Jamar Bantan, Omar Mendez, Eljada Flores, Edelmar Saco, Mimie Kasuya, Tito Bailey, Steffie Flores, Agnes Ali, Sitti Mokim, Jameen Ulama, Aida Salva, Rahel Ann Mangcab, Hanil Mucad, Ibrahim Abdulla and Lester Hale Ibanal. —Alberto Arenas Jr., Inquirer Mindanao

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INQUIRER

OPINION

Good soldiers

EDITORIAL

ON A few occasions in the last couple of weeks, when his name came up as a potential appointee to the Cabinet, Cavite Rep. Joseph Abaya showed unprovoked by saying he was a good soldier, and would help President Aquino in whatever capacity. We like that image of the good soldier, because it suggests a bracing sense of duty, to flag and country.

That sense was almost palpable last Friday, when both Abaya and Secretary Mar Roxas accepted their new marching orders from the President: Roxas to the Department of the Interior and Local Government, Abaya to replace Roxas at the Department of Transportation and Communications.

A tired Roxas looked like he felt the full weight of his new assignment, to fill the "big cowboy" or slippers, in his politically astute phrase, of his friend the late Jesse Robredo.

What kind of appointee would Roxas make? Last week, we offered a basic taxonomy of D.I.G chiefs, culled from historical experience: some were executives appointed to tame the D.I.G bureaucracy, some were reformers who prioritize peace and order, and some were electoral politicians who harness the department's resources for political gain.

Critics of Roxas from both the right and the left, and also seasoned users from within the administration, immediately saw his appointment as politically motivated; they said he was being deployed to the D.I.G to promote the interests of the Liberal Party he was party president of, and to which President Aquino belongs.

The notion that there is something untoward about appointing LP leaders to high positions can be quickly dealt with. The President ran as a Liberal, on a Liberal-coalition platform; it is surely no easy task to let campaign commitments evaporate, shouldn't he appoint those he can trust?

The idea that Roxas was moved to the D.I.G to prepare for the 2013 and even the 2016 elections—that is not so easily dismissed. But we must point out that Roxas, who topped the electoral list last time he ran for the Senate, is not included in the slate of senators President Aquino is forming for next year's polls; if Roxas were acutely interested in higher elective office, would he put himself out of the running?

It is also difficult to imagine Roxas wearing Robredo's uniform of plain shirt, shorts and slippers and then mixing with the people; his public image as a well-groomed "Mr. Palengke" shows him simultaneously part of and apart from ordinary people. We can also anticipate that he will need to learn to be more accessible, to just about anyone, if he is to truly follow in Robredo's footsteps.

But on other key criteria, Roxas—and Abaya too—fit the Robredo-esque bill. They share a deserved reputation for professionalism; in Roxas' case, it is a reputation that has survived service in the Cabinet of three very different presidents.

We can expect both Roxas and Abaya, then, to be both engaging and creative—to use Robredo's own terms of art for effective professionalism—in their new assignments.

Roxas and Abaya also share Robredo's reformist agenda; the difference is that they would have learned from Robredo's initial, teary experience at the D.I.G. We note that while Abaya said he would work with the "high-caliber" team Roxas assembled at the DOTC and would only need to hire an executive assistant, Roxas emphasized that the President had given him the necessary authority to reorganize the leadership team at the D.I.G—a pointed reference to the unusual case of Undersecretary Rico Puno, who had served as an alternative source of power in Robredo's department.

We can expect Roxas and Abaya, then, to pursue reforms in good governance that their ally Robredo would have approved.

Above all: Despite a long political career, Roxas has never been tainted with any rumors of corruption. (Abaya too.) It is not that his own family's great wealth insulates him from temptation; after all, there are any number of already wealthy politicians who suffer from unredeemed greed. It is or must be a matter of character, learned from the self-sacrificing example of his own father, the late senator Gerardo Roxas.

We can expect Roxas, then, and Abaya too, to be like Robredo in this vital regard: They will keep to the straight and narrow.

It is telling that, on the day of his appointment, Roxas made sure to surrender to the media that he was only half the President's full backing, he also had the support of the wild one Leni Robredo—it was like a seal of approval, a benediction almost, on soldiers out to fight the good fight.

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Telephone numbers: 896-6000 to 09
Subscription rates: Metro Manila, Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao, Overseas
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Why is Comelec so slow to execute its own decision?

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

FORMER T. Sagalongos was elected mayor of Isnan, Cavite, three times, but each time he was not able to finish his term. His opponents invariably filed election protests and every time he would be executed.

The last time he was elected was in the 2010 local elections which already used PCOS machines. Sagalongos was proclaimed the winning mayoral candidate with 46,101 votes. Nasing his opponent, Daniel Mallari, by a margin of 8,499 votes. Like the two previous losing candidates against Sagalongos, Mallari filed an election protest with the Isnan Regional Trial Court presided over by Judge Cesar Mangrobang.

The RTC declared Mallari the winner and he assumed the post of Isnan mayor. Sagalongos went to the Commission on Elections which, after reviewing the photographs of the original ballots cast during the elections, declared Sagalongos the true winner. However, unlike other losing candidates who immediately moved a writ of execution to oust Mallari as mayor, the Comelec, which had declared Sagalongos as the real winner, has until now not issued a writ of execution. Its failure remains the mayor and Sagalongos the vice mayor-in-waiting in...

Meanwhile, only a few months are left of Sagalongos's term and they are running out. There will be another election next year. Sagalongos is wondering why the Comelec is dragging its feet on the writ of execution. Yes, why is the Comelec so quiet in issuing copies of the both and issuing a mandamus for P400 million but too slow in enforcing its own decision?

Maybe these three short sell explain this inaction. Sagalongos is a member of the Magdalo party, a local political party Mallari is a member of President Aquino's ruling Liberal Party; a son of Rep. Jayong Mallari, formerly governor of Cavite, the LP kingpin in the province.

Mallari's lawyer in his election protest was Ilinois Bellosillo. The son of Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago. Sagalongos's counsel was Lydia de Lima, now the secretary of justice who has no say in election matters at all.

This morning, Sagalongos's supporters will picket the Comelec to force it to issue a writ of execution.

Here is a background of the case after Mallari filed his election protest against Sagalongos with the Isnan RTC, RTC Judge Mangrobang ordered the opening of the ballot boxes and the recounting of votes. Sagalongos protested, saying that the voting was already mechanized and there was no need to go through the tedious process of recounting each ballot. Mallari countered that he did not trust the PCOS machines and insisted on a manual recount of the ballots, which the judge allowed.

In November 2011, Judge Mangrobang declared Mallari the winner after he ineffected at least 8,400 votes for Sagalongos but added more votes for Mallari.

Despite repeated objections by Sagalongos, Judge Mangrobang blocked the printing of the pictures of the original ballots used in the contested ballot cards. Mallari asked for an immediate writ of execution which the judge quickly granted, thereby unseating Sagalongos. Mallari took over as mayor in December 2011.

Sagalongos filed a petition for certiorari with the Comelec claiming that Mangrobang's hasty issuance of the writ of execution was tainted with grave abuse of discretion. Sagalongos also filed a separate appeal with the Comelec questioning Mangrobang's decision which he said was erroneous.

Early in 2012, the Comelec's First Division provided each of the contenders three hundred printed the pictures of the original ballots and in the elections. The division discovered that the ballot boxes were tampered with after the elections and the ballots revised by Mangrobang were reduced to nullify Sagalongos's votes and to increase Mallari's votes.

In May 2012, the First Division issued a resolution in the contested case, saying that Mangrobang's refusal to allow the printing of the photographs of the original ballots was arbitrary and unjust, and that there was "no good reason" for Mangrobang to quickly issue the writ of execution. The Comelec First Division ordered Mangrobang's order that ousted Mallari as mayor.

Mallari filed a petition with the Comelec en banc, asking the entire commission to reverse the resolution of the First Division in the contested case. Meanwhile, he remains mayor of Isnan while his petition remains pending.

Last May 31, 2012, the Comelec's First Division issued a unanimous decision in the appealed case, confirming that the original ballots were tampered with after the elections. It declared that the result of the recount of the votes based on the photographs of the original ballots cast during the elections Sagalongos won, beating Mallari by a margin of 8,430 votes. Mallari filed a motion for reconsideration, arguing that the decision of the First Division is unlawful because it was issued by only three commissioners instead of the required four. The Comelec en banc is composed of seven commissioners.

Sagalongos petitioned for the issuance of a writ of execution so he could reassume the position of mayor of Isnan. But the Comelec seems to have other important matters to attend to. So his ousted, with P400 million as rental for a warehouse to store PCOS machines, but it has little time to issue a writ of execution to return an elected mayor like Sagalongos to his rightful place in Isnan.

By the way, with only a fraction of the P400-million rental, the Comelec can build its own warehouse. The P400 million rental money is good only for 10 months, after which the Comelec will have to shell out another P400 million. With its own warehouse, however, the Comelec will have a permanent storehouse for its votes. Why is the Comelec so willing to spend taxpayers' money on expenditures that it can avoid?

Sublimely paralytic

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

WHY DOES Mar Roxas succeeding Jesse Robredo suck? Let me count the ways.

One, Robredo was the face of local governance, Roxas is the face of ambition, and not one made of stone either.

To say that Robredo made the country sit up and take notice of the possibilities of local governance is to say that Mother Teresa made the world sit up and take notice of the possibilities of compassion. It is the understatement of the year. As recently as last May 2013, by the way, what seemed like it, he transformed the sluggish, under-achieving, place that it was to the bustling city it is now. He was one of the lead officials of this country, like Edsa[sic] Napoleon and Susie go Ilocos—however you differ with their politics—who actually made a difference in their cities. Cinco Pulisa and Ed Panlilio would also come a bit later on for banking overwhelming odds and winning against big time cops, but their terms would be too short to bring the governorship to the same league as Robredo's terms.

But Robredo went further than his peers, which the Ramon Magsaysay Foundation acknowledged by giving him the award for governance in 2000, making him the first local official to have won it. He was a national fit for the Department of the Interior and Local Government. Today, no one can imagine the "God's-then" as anyone but Mother Ifunado; today, no one can imagine the interior and local government secretary as anyone but Jesse Robredo.

If Roxas has transformed anything, it is only himself into a mediocrity. That was what he did after stepping down as Liberal Party presidential bet in 2013, and depicting it as the ultimate sacrifice for God and country. Sacrifice from whom? He was languishing as the bottom-ranking of the "presidentiables" and got a high-octane boost only by playing Santa to P-Noy's Lone Ranger. Hoping to reverse the tide, or make P-Noy his toast, after they both got to power. P-Noy won, he did not. Losing is worse than forgetting how he got his edge, which was by ingratiating himself to the masters of fates with his "sacrifice." It is that seeking domineering role as exactly he has paralyzed in put other humans in government.

As the head of the Department of Transportation and Communications, he succeeded only in bringing transportation and communications to a standstill, leaving erstwhile believers like Yoyoy Villame's sons embarrassed. But not when Roxas would run over one to express the executive his attention. Roxas now has the distinction of filling in the shoes of two exemplarily capable secretaries: Florg de Jesus of the DOTC and Jesse Robredo of the DILG, and finding them size 10 in between.

The closest Roxas got to "seismic politics" was having himself photographed beside your market with the caption "Mr. Palengke," and driving a pedicab with the caption "Mr. Pedicab," without wearing helmet anyway. He could all he wants "but all the palengke he'll get to is Gateway; it would have done for one of he had himself photographed riding a horse, what in hand. With him, coincide is not the first thing that comes to mind, except he.

But what takes the cake is that the DILG should now be in the hands of someone who is as resolutely inept as Robredo was not. What kept striking to P-Noy like a knife over when he wasn't a member of the Cabinet, joining himself off as one of Washington, DC, he deployed evidently to his rival. Jojo Binay, becoming DILG chief on the ground that he would use it for political ends, whose party now openly admits they need the 2013 for next year's elections. Who forged an alliance with the one party, the MILF, whose head they claimed was the mastermind of the Mamasapano, the better to right that with fire, the better to foil the enemy's crapo ways by being more inept.

The sound you're hearing is Robredo willing in his grave.

There, Robredo was humble, Roxas was humbled. In death, Robredo was exalted by his accomplishments, in life Roxas means to exalt himself by riding on them.

Robredo will be sorely believed by the people. Roxas, well, he can at least count on one.

Pity, appointing Robredo to the DILG was sublime.

Appointing Roxas to the DILG is paralysis.

Understanding Catholic universities

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

IN 1992 (20 years) Catholic universities one must begin with Canon 808 of the Code of Canon Law which says: "Even if it really be Catholic, no university may bear the title or name Catholic university without the consent of the competent ecclesiastical authority." In that technical juridical sense, the Roman and American Catholic universities in the Philippines, for example, are perhaps, which are publicly regarded as Catholic, are not in juridical sense Catholic. But are they Catholic in any other sense?

Ex Corde Canon 808 requires that institutions which do not have the juridical status of Catholic can in fact be "truly Catholic." The appellation of Catholic can come from various sources. It can come, for instance, from its origins as founded by various religious orders (Jesuit and women). That in fact is how most Catholic universities in the Philippines started. The appellation also comes from its mission. In fact the Philippine constitution recognizes that not only the Roman Catholic but also the "traditionally religious" can establish educational institutions.

It must also be said that a commercial title is not the litmus test for being truly Catholic. Pope John Paul II in his Ex Corde Ecclesiae (hereinafter, ECE) in speech/text to Catholic universities in the United States, both canonically recognized and not, he said:

"A Catholic university or college must make a specific contribution to the Church and to society. It is a forum in which all aspects of human life, each in its full study of problems, and a just sense of history together with the concern to show the full meaning of the human person created in the image of God, thus forming the complete development of the person. Furthermore, the Catholic university or college must be a community more and women of outstanding knowledge who, having made a personal synthesis of faith and culture, are both capable and willing to assume tasks in the service of the community and of society in general, and in their witness

as their faith before the world. And finally, to be what it ought to be, a Catholic college or university must set up, among its faculty and students, a real community which bears witness to a living and operative Christianity, a community where sincere commitment to scientific research and study goes together with a deep commitment to authentic Christian living.

"This is your identity. This is your vocation.... The term 'Catholic' will never be a mere label, rather added or dropped according to the presence of varying factors."

Briefly, a Catholic university is not just an institute for teaching catechism.

Further, in the same speech, John Paul II emphasized the importance of academic freedom: "As one who for long years has been a university professor, I will never tire of insisting on the eminent role of the university, which is in essence but also to be a place of scientific research, in both these fields, its activity is deeply related to the deepest and noblest aspirations of the human person: the desire to come to the knowledge of truth. So universities can rightfully deserve the esteem of the world of higher learning, unless it applies the highest standards of scientific research, constantly questioning the methods and searching instruments, and unless it excels in scholarship, and therefore in freedom of investigation."

It is in this context that Fr. Jose "Joe" Villarin has defended what the Ateneo professors have been saying. At the same time, this is the occasion and something to which Ateneo professors, and other professors of Catholic universities, must exercise their individual consciences. Similarly, those who criticize them must meet them in the context of the field of expertise from which they write and not only in the limited context of the Philippine Catholicism.

One last thought I also ask: is Satan for being faithful to the teachings of the Society of Jesus? We do not intend to disagree among ourselves about almost everything. As an Italian saying goes, *Se trovi, quello e opinioni.* Perhaps issues of some merit. But I think that non-negotiable opinions of Jesuits in school are we will find them overwhelmingly in agreement with the words of the supreme general of the Jesuits, Fr. Dean Brackley in his address titled "The Social Dimension of the Light of Ignatian Charism." He said: "The best form we to try to conquer the universal, to take a more broad viewpoint of evangelization or, worse still, for proselytizing. The university has its own purposes which cannot be subordinated to other objectives. It is important to respect institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and to safeguard personal and communal ethos." Today's Jesuits, as much as ever, must first there is no inherent schizophrenia in the identity of a Jesuit college or university: "Be a Catholic university, or one of Christian inspiration, under the responsibility of the Society of Jesus, there does not exist—nor can there exist—any opposition between the goals proper to the university and the Christian and Jesuit inspiration that should characterize any apostolic institution of the Society of Jesus."

Father Joe told me at supper that Archbishop Dinn Tagle, at the invite for Jesus Rebredo, considered not to interfere with the Ateneo (probably with e-mail) to be present to things and serves coming his way from "Jesuit Catholic (Archdiocese) Jesus (an) Ateneo. He's young and was elected as one of the same Ateneo college batch as Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno.

Of cadets, leftists and peacemakers

HEAT OF all, a story of courage and selflessness.

Nine Class Cadet Alfonso Arellano of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) was in Manila last weekend to serve as coaches during the nationwide entrance examinations for the PMA. He was assigned to a group of interested young men in Alimodian to assist applicants who were scheduled for the written exams that were the initial step on the road to a possible cadet slot at the nation's premier military institute in Baguio City.

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

According to news reports, Arellano was a passenger in a jeepney playing the routes in Barangay Granite Lagro in Quezon City when a fellow jeepney driver tried to collect point and announced a holdup. While in the process of directing 9 women passengers of his valuables, Arellano boldly lunged at the robber and attempted to take away his firearm. Unfortunately the gunman was able to wait and shot Arellano in the neck with the bullet exiting through his face. The degree of the surgery brought the wounded cadet to the new General Hospital this which he was transferred to the U.Asia Medical Center of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The latest report indicates that Arellano is stable condition but remains unconscious and still on intermediate (IC) medication.

Cadet Arellano is a native of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. The son of a retired Marine master sergeant, he is the third in a family of seven boys and two girls. He also has an uncle who served in the military.

We join the PMA community in praying for his speedy recovery. His courageous action in the defense of innocent lives to personal safety are a source of pride and inspiration for all. "Remember," the solemn vows in the Honor Guidelines of the Corps. As latter senior Elpidio Manuel put it, "Rules dictated that even though he was still a cadet, the PMA had already initiated in him.... and this gave rise the use of the PMA cadets... the ideal of sacrificial heroism, and selfless service to the motherland of the word. He was willing to face danger and even offered his life for others... he was only a man of service, giving of himself selflessly. It is such and every Filipino's fervent prayer that the good Lord help him survive what he is going through now, the country needs men of valor like him."

Two weeks ago... on the initiative of the national security adviser, Secretary Cesar Garcia Jr., a number of retired senior AFP officers had an opportunity to meet with President's Ronaldo M. Llamas, presidential adviser on political affairs, and Dean Marvic Leonen, chair of the Philippine government panel for the peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

The topic of Secretary Llamas was "Seeing Beyond Shades of Red. Nuns, Mutes and Macroeconomics about the Philippine Left," among the Cabinet members of the present administration. Llamas probably has the dashed file at the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP). The conclusion the officer to talk about his particular life, the different issues and views along the way that ultimately led to his appointment to a senior adviser to the Commander-in-Chief.

Llamas is a socialist. My colleagues in the AFP may see things differently but if we disagree everyone values his faith in left of center, we may be moving out on some of the issues and we are not in the Philippines. We can say that's something like this: "What you're seeing and you opinion radical (like in a relative sense) views, your heart is in the right place. But when you grow older and you still grow radical position, then your mind may not be in the right place."

Often I have wondered where I am on the political spectrum—left, right or center. I am not saying that I am a conservative while facing the Almighty. My heart is on the left side, but my synapses leads me somewhere right.

Secretary Llamas enjoys a good movie once in a while. He should try the Top movies lower one and then, perhaps with a Coke and a bucket of popcorn. Watching DVDs at home is the ideal way to relax from the stress of work.

There is nothing wrong with Llamas, and other socialist-leaning colleagues in government. When communism was in its greatest height of power during the Cold War, it was no other leadership that stood the test for many of the cancers in Western Europe. If we are to move forward to tomorrow, we should be able to connect the haves and nots, children of all our people, regardless of political inclination.

* * *

Dean Leonen, chair of the Philippine panel for talks with the MILF, gave us a very informative update on his discussions with the MILF. Many of the points he raised helped to clarify some of my misgivings about the peace talks. Among those issues were sensitive and he asked for confidentiality on these matters.

Leonen informed the group that he assumes from President Aquino comes five areas: 1) upholding the country's sovereignty; 2) maintaining territorial integrity; 3) looking into the debates of the Constitution; 4) (unexplained); and 5) consultations with all affected sectors.

In his briefing, Leonen stated his belief that the MILF was no longer interested in pursuing independence or even an amendment of the Constitution to accommodate some of its demands. He cites the proposed peace agreement as one that would satisfy its desire for limited autonomy within the framework of the present Constitution.

It was on this point that I raised some concerns. I mentioned that during his lifetime, former MILF chair Hashim Salamat had one dearly his position on the issue of independence. According to Salamat, the objective of the MILF is to establish a truly Islamic government in a Bangsamoro homeland. The establishment of the proposed Bangsamoro Juridical Entity does state may be subject to a plebiscite. But what is non-negotiable in the setting up of an independent Bangsamoro is Dar Islam (land). He also believed that the creation of Moro society and its transformation must be deeply rooted in Islamic principles and values.

It may seem that the present MILF leadership is change positions—in the sense of independence, and we may get a peace agreement on the basis of the creation of a new autonomous political entity to replace the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. But this is no guarantee that other groups such as the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement or the new generation of Moro leaders will find this arrangement acceptable. There is also the issue of the disarmament and difficult issue of demobilization and demobilization. After the signing of a peace treaty we will continue to have 12,000 armed personnel with high-powered firearms roaming around and possibly serving as the nucleus of an armed forces for the new entity.

Leonen was a peace agreement being signed within the term The Aquino administration.

My position remains the same. We must strengthen our Armed Forces and be ready for any unforeseen developments. We continue to negotiate, but it must be from a position of strength. Most important of all, we must not forget Al-Barka.

Can P-Noy tame Nature's fury?

COMMENTARY

Leandro "Ito" Coronel

IN THE aftermath of Tropical Storm "Genka" in 2009, local government units made a big show of pledging their drainage systems because experience had taught them clogged sewers choked off the escape routes for rainwater.

The drop in experience in early August with the southwest monsoon, made even more devastating by Typhoon "Gener," tells us the efforts in 2009 weren't nearly enough. It was either because the P4.5-billion Metro Manila Flood Control Project (MMFCP) was not finished in time, or because no Filipino 30-foot Manhole monitor gave us amounts of garbage enough to open wide the sewers that were developed after Ondoy. Experts say quite telling is one that the spillage in the first month of August was greatly exacerbated by our non-biodegradable plastic consumer-driven environmental and safety measures.

The reports have been mounting that the national and local government units put in place poor, sub-standard and failing measures in order to make our communities safe from natural disasters. Apart from the MMFCP, the rehabilitation of infrastructure to secure areas that are prone to flooding and landslides attack, in turn, create other problems, especially during severe weather conditions.

Most poor landside relocating residents take up shanties built in the hills. Their makeshift dwellings are thus likely to become prone to calamities because of density and topographical changes must think seriously about moving out of their areas, however meager attached they are to their homes. And non-inclusive relocation sites must be developed for the safe and decent needs of squatters (even called informal settlers).

The issue of "informal settling" has become a social and moral dilemma. Social because great numbers of people occupy land that belongs to others, depriving them of their economic use or in some cases their property. And moral because how do you in conscience throw out the same people, hapless and powerless, to fend for themselves out there in risk by living in unsafe areas like riverbanks and hillsides, and honestly convert hardpan to Forever. And others assess and high avoid the land, but look for a solution to blame to build, or are our eyes were turned.

But there must be relief in sight. President Aquino has gone in total flood-mitigation area and told residents of his direction to start building in homes more than half in the zone to medium-term under-construction from public authorities.

Indeed, as I was writing this, the public works secretary was briefing Malacañang reporters about an immediate P5 billion effort to kick-start remedial and repair action on beyond mere, dikes and roads. And a P170 billion flood control program in the works and will span two decades of construction.

Mr. Aquino has to be chosen that both his immediate and his local are in the right places. Despite what those who are predisposed and preprejudiced to not like him say, he has to be chosen that he knows what he's doing. He's not the people, especially those who have suffered over the years from the state's devastating fury, must hold him to his word.

We the people must take advantage of having a caring leader and must that he put his words into concrete action. We have all been guilty of indifference toward proper disposal of our daily household and industrial waste. How many times have authorities advised, implored, cajoled, threatened, and mandated us to dispose of our garbage properly? And how many times have we ignored these basic ecological imperatives? Selfishness, or as we quite put it, not protecting our environment, or not taking care of public facilities and infrastructure, is being antithetical about proper sanitary and safety measures.

We ourselves abuse our surroundings, even vandalize public structures and facilities, and then blame others when disaster strikes. We are those who cause the problems that plague our lives.

We put our lives at risk by living in unsafe areas like riverbanks and hillsides, and honestly convert hardpan to Forever. And others assess and high avoid the land, but look for a solution to blame to build, or are our eyes were turned.

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Indeed, as I was writing this, the public works secretary was briefing Malacañang reporters about an immediate P5 billion effort to kick-start remedial and repair action on beyond mere, dikes and roads. And a P170 billion flood control program in the works and will span two decades of construction.

Mr. Aquino has to be chosen that both his immediate and his local are in the right places. Despite what those who are predisposed and preprejudiced to not like him say, he has to be chosen that he knows what he's doing. He's not the people, especially those who have suffered over the years from the state's devastating fury, must hold him to his word.

We the people must take advantage of having a caring leader and must that he put his words into concrete action. We have all been guilty of indifference toward proper disposal of our daily household and industrial waste. How many times have authorities advised, implored, cajoled, threatened, and mandated us to dispose of our garbage properly? And how many times have we ignored these basic ecological imperatives? Selfishness, or as we quite put it, not protecting our environment, or not taking care of public facilities and infrastructure, is being antithetical about proper sanitary and safety measures.

We ourselves abuse our surroundings, even vandalize public structures and facilities, and then blame others when disaster strikes. We are those who cause the problems that plague our lives.

Leandro "Ito" Coronel's commentaries have appeared in the Philippine newspapers and are currently carried by Al-Jazeera publications in their international forums.

Because of Magsaysay

I PROUD not have been a lawyer without Ramon Magsaysay. I mean, I would have been killed in a fierce encounter between the then Philippine Constabulary (PC) and the Huks in a remote town in Quezon province in the early 1950s if not for him.

I was only 11 years old at the time of the encounter, details of which as to where and when I have been described as one of the darkest chapters in Philippine history. It was the time when Jose P. Laurel, standard-bearer of The Nacionalista Party and a previous term, was allegedly elected to execute by the then president. It was said that even "the Huks and the Japs" voted to Laurel and Magsaysay was defeated.

I remember how my father, a diehard Nacionalista campaign manager in our town, went because of that electoral debacle. In protest of the electoral fraud, a group of Batanguenos held an abortive uprising that lasted for more than a month and after was declared "Republic of Malvar."

The administration was so ridden with graft and corruption that the Huks were gaining a lot of followers in southern Luzon. Many of the disenfranchised joined the rebels in fighting the government. My classmates and I were among those regular in skirmishes between the PC and the Huks, headed by a charismatic and handsome commander with the looks of Jose Padilla Jr., a dashing movie actor at the time. I knew him only as "Kumander Dodo." His "alyansa," which was composed of about 23 rebels, stayed in our house for more than a month. They ordered their meals food (with my family providing the rice) and washed their underclothes during their stay.

Kumander Dodo counted my older sister and called me "Supot." Brother to her. He discussed theories and circumstances of democracy since the Huks were fighting for it. I was impressed by their points. These words and concepts proved significant in the later years and became my creed.

I remember how much I admired his intellectual and calibre proud. He even told me he would give it to me if I joined them. I thought he was talking.

When the whole left our house, Kumander Dodo promised to return for me. He gave me his ally's cartoon title as "mutal" for their stay. "Use it when necessary," he told my father.

My classmates, who was barely 14, used with the rebels when they left and disappeared into the forested areas after crossing the Malvar River.

I used the cartoon to thwart checkers so that my maternal grandmother could cook meals for the family. She often scolded me for this, and told me to just catch the checkers.

About 10 days after Kumander Dodo and his group had left, the PC raided and ransacked our house without any search warrant and confiscated my "toy." My father complained to our town's captain, who advised him not to file a formal complaint and warned him that he could be charged with illegal possession of a firearm. That was the last time we talked about the rifle.

It was very timely. The year was 1950 and Magsaysay was appointed secretary of national defense on his birthday, Aug. 31. He immediately started the policy of attraction, dropping leaflets in the mountains and surrounding areas, and telling the rebels that those who surrendered would be given cows, land to cultivate—and more importantly, amnesty.

My classmate was one of those who surrendered. He told me that Kumander Dodo and 13 others had been killed in a three-encounter with government troops in Tayabas province. My classmate had been waiting for Kumander Dodo to remember me. It was providential that he never did. Otherwise, I would have been one of the casualties.

Magsaysay was the speaker during the high school graduation two older brothers in the early 1950s. It was against the law fighting the government and could send the people to jail. My schoolmates'll be graduates towards very hard and become our enemies if I'm not brother.

After that speech, I was among those who shook hands with Magsaysay. His right arm ended my mentor to finish my studies and become a lawyer.

I studied very hard, graduated salutatorian of our batch, and was admitted as an honorary scholar to the provincial high school. I wrote Magsaysay letters which he invariably answered when he was running for president in 1953. I found out years later that some of his letters were written by Rafael D. Dilao, who would later become my boss at the University of the Philippines (he was vice president during the time of Carlos P. Romulo's presidency). I graduated among the top five in the province's high school and entered UP in the premedical program. Six years later, I completed my law degree in UP's Diliman.

Looking back, I have realized that I would not have become a lawyer were it not for Magsaysay's powerful speech and the inspiring leadership that became manifest.

The Philippine democracy came undone to me with the death of former Secretary Jesse Robredo in a plane crash on Aug. 18. Magsaysay, a much beloved President, died in a plane crash on March 17, 1957, and the nation mourned his death.)

Ricardo T. Jose is a former aide-de-camp and retired director of the UP Alumni Relations Development Office. He can also be now spends his time reading the daily circles and writing newspaper drafts, beginning with this column.

LETTERS

Kato a pain in the neck to gov't, MILF

MORE SO do with separatists who have publicly declared they will refuse to abide by any agreement between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the government? There is a predicament brewing in the negotiating table, and it is turning into a major stumbling block in the peace talks.

Ahmid Ulama Kato, the renegade MILF commander, has become a pain in the neck not only to the government but also to the MILF itself. The incumbent MILF commander and his renegade contingents have pillaged Muslim and Christian communities and have displaced thousands of Cotabato-based Muslims, Christians and Lumad who have nothing to do or with in part of their murderous adventurism.

Kato knows he is wanted by area for crimes he committed in the past. He surrounds himself with equally lawless marauders who refuse to be bound by any standard of discipline or by any rule of engagement. It will be a folly for either the government or the MILF to negotiate using Kato's arms as the ace in the hole and who thinks that life depends on those whose fingers are on the trigger of a gun.

What aggravates the dilemma on Kato is his penchant to serve renegade and notorious elements who, like him, are wanted criminals. Most, if not all, the remaining bandits in the area have found an ally in Kato and he gets some of moral, available by being surrounded by those sinful dogs. It is not surprising that criminal elements have found sanctuary in Kato's territory.

There are solutions to the ongoing peace problem. Conflicts can be settled at negotiating tables. The Moro National Liberation Front signed a peace accord with government, and not a few of its members who had no organizational ties found satisfaction with the implementation of their socio-economic programs. But the MILF has opted to negotiate for power, and even as it talks with the Philippine government, foreign governments have manifested its endorsement to rehabilitation and development projects for the Bangsamoro people.

As for the time who plays the scenario for peace, the government and the MILF may opt to jointly adopt other approaches to entice a persisting problem.

—ELISA BULAVAN,
elisa_de_jesus@yahoo.com

Shadowy, sinister Opus Dei?

THIS IS in response to Elmar Jimenez Dardich's column on August 7, 2012, where she made mention of Opus Dei.

I am a member of Opus Dei. Is it an evil sect or what is it as "shadowy and sinister."

Kindly refer to my website (opusdei.org.ph) for complete information.

—MONINA ALLARDE HIDALGO

Nature and role of science relative to RH bill

DON'T PUBLISHED commentaries against the Reproductive Health bill, including some recent ones by Fr. Bernas (Inquirer, August 19) and Msgr. Ben Arg. (7 ("Must we die RH bill: a defense of life"), show poor public understanding of science. I thought of sharing a summary of my replies to some of them, in particular, about the nature of science.

The objectives of science, as I learned, are not to find the truth. They are aimed to understand nature and the universe, so that researchers and the government can plan and act for the people's well-being. Many studies are aimed at providing information as to evolution and climate change. Some, these are factual conclusions—supported by solid data. They are not persuasive truth, they can be changed by more studies. This is the progressive nature of science.

Such nature of science explains why most, but not all, predictions by scientists—like those of Paul Ehrlich's "Population Bomb" (1968), and the Chernobyl nuclear disaster (1986)—have largely failed. Continued research explains the observations. Thus, the conservative actions of science—or upon unexpected results—that is the scientific/science nature of scientific research. The discovery of DNT (continued/pharmaceutical/science base) for treating breast cancer, includes their unexpected effects on the reproductive system. Both results of science helped policy decisions....on AIDS/condom use and its subsequent worldwide ban.

The climate of demographic science (or the science of human population) is applied to the question who are against the RH bill, have no scientific basis. I have yet to see properly published studies—the Social Classes Index (SCI)—says "demographic science" in the article 1986, "We can also search [with Advanced Google Scholar] for such titles [titles or, with demographic science] of valid studies... Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI)—in social sciences, anyone will handle find any such information should guide publications including social disciplines.

Scientists do not debate religious views. They try to explain science. "Science and religion are different ways of understanding, fortifying placing them in opposition reduces the position of both to contributes to a false [unity]."

—PURIFICACION LI
retired professor of marine sciences,
University of the Philippines Diliman

RH bill: 'Poor excuse for taking easy way out'

THE REPRODUCTIVE Health bill has become hot topic in lunch conversations and brownballer. Every morning at 4pm, school students, many of us follow the news and read the papers to keep ourselves updated, but despite the pro-RH bill stories, videos and campaign materials, we found them lower bullet! The RH bill is not only detrimental to the Filipino society, it is also a poor excuse for taking the easy way out and earn money in the process.

Religion and faith aside, we think the RH bill will just open another window for corruption. For a country struggling to eradicate poverty, we think the people in charge should make a big government is saying that it has the money for contraceptives, yet it can't even seem to provide three complete meals a day for poor families. Doesn't this sound quite strange and "fishy"?

Another point: Many government officials believe that the bill should be passed to put a stop to overpopulation and overcrowding in some cities and towns. Let's face undeniable why these places are so densely populated with 100 of cities in fact, it's because Filipinos know that there are more opportunities in industrialized and urban centers. However, if government opens new opportunities in rural areas, chances are that the migration to urban centers would become less and less.

Also, Section 26 of the bill states that the government will reimburse family planning supplies as well as medications and these supplies shall be included in the regular purchase of "search medicines" to all local hospitals and other government units. This is wrong because the bill will practically give everybody, young and adult alike, access to contraceptives anywhere. It will allow the government of contraceptives with government funds for distribution to everyone without due regard to marriage as an institution. This will encourage premarital sex, which in turn will render useless the provisions of marriage. Moreover in the bill do the authors uphold the Biblical principle and the Filipino value that marriage is sacred, and that sex should come within the context of marriage. In fact clarified, authors have failed to mention in section by which couples could back marriage as a foundation of the family.

The bill is supposed to address issues such as abortion and HIV/AIDS, but we think that's a bill could've not been prohibited.

The RH bill also aims to promote women empowerment, but how can we do so when the bill itself is subservient? Most of the policies in the RH bill reminds women because they are the ones who will become affected by these policies and they are the ones who will have to suffer the consequences if they dare to engage in pre-marital sex.

The suggestion that the RH bill will alleviate country's problems and propel our nation to economic progress is misleading. If we really want to progress, why kill the innocent? Let's punish the guilty instead.

—MARIO LEDEL SOFIA INGALADA AL
TRISH PERON, ELA LORENZO,
KRISTIAN RAIA and PATRICIA BANATT

On September 29, 2012, the Philippine Business for Education (PBEd), Lifestyle Asia and the National Museum of the Philippines together bring you "THE NIGHT OF ONE THOUSAND at the Museum"

This year, we celebrate the month of teachers and the new beginning of the National Art Gallery, with a dinner at the newly restored Old Senate Hall. Proceeds of the event go to PBEd's 1000 Teachers Program.
Major galleries will be made available to guests for exclusive viewing.

For more information on the event, the 1000 Teachers Program, or the National Museum, please call Katrina Luz at (0917) 988.2845 or email her at mail.ca@pbed.ph
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"[I SEE] [one man, engine Pipes Swarm in existence or in production which has a meaningful biological comparisons. The plane said, but, than a kingdom from the sheep on what was, otherwise a clear day. It was established that except for necessary June method's adequate ratio, everybody on board were down with the plane. From the time the side was Inland for the huge than others would break the surface. The succeeding rescue operation was thorough and was fairly smooth and methodical. There is more to the eventuality, after the first 24 hours passed without a trace of Governor Robredo, that he cannot survive the plane crash.

But of course, I could not voice out my opinion on the list. I did not want to aggravate the anguish that everybody was going through.

As to why good people have to die young while the bad ones live to a ripe old age, and why only forty-nine-fourth rejects have to so patiently and unimposing as making on a diet of watermelon is one of life's great mysteries. There was even a time when tragedies like this would make me question and challenge my faith. But over the years, I have learned to accept fact and to acknowledge everything in the world. I have come to realize that sometimes God has his own reasons which even reason itself could still refuse to believe.

So congratulations for a life well lived and rest in peace, dear Jess. In life, the traditional politicians never confirmed your Catholic portrait visiting quasi-rooms and high shore unfaithful must have been before the angel's arrival. Of "good, good servant." I am confident with the thought that in death, you need not undergo a "confirmation hearing" just to be able to enter the kingdom of heaven. Surely, the gates of St. Peter will readily open, and the angels will sing hosannas as God welcomes you in his heavenly mansion.

Why do people like Governor Jess—a humble and incorruptible leader who genuinely cared for the poor—have to die young? Perhaps, the answer could be found in a line from an old Jim Morrison song: Summary Robredo "... this world was never meant for one as beautiful as you..."

—BOY RIL PEREL,
president,
Integrated Bar of the Philippines-Leyte
(IBP-Leyte) Chapter, reperelaw@yahoo.com

Bam Aquino: I can serve PH better as a senator

From page A1

three issues further and make these part of the national discourse," Bam said in a recent meeting with Inquirer editors and reporters when asked to put whether he would be better off reform-wise in his current chair in the company of "lungs," or crocodiles, in the upper house.

In his advocacy, the 33-year old, who has never run for a barangay post or any public office, said the name of the game was "coordination."

Bam said the primary issue today was finding jobs for young people. He proposed to address this by looking at education and employment as a process, a continuum, which should be closely coordinated by schools, industries and concerned agencies.

He cofounded MicroEnsurance Inc. in 2006, a social enterprise company that provides microinsurance to small entrepreneurs. MicroEnsurance manages the Digidoy Store, a program that aims to empower variety store owners, which received the 2011 UN Project Impact award.

Bam, son of Ninoy Aquino and Cory Aquino, and brother of former Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino Jr., has announced his plans to run under the ruling Liberal Party (LP), which has yet to announce its Senate slate in the 2013 elections.

So, the President did not encourage him to enter politics, he said. He was talked into it by Sen. Francis Pangilinan and Tony Meloto of Gawad Kalinga.

Political dynasty issue

Critics were quick to slam his candidacy, terming the Aquino and Cojuangco of building a dynasty to prevent their tribunal in the Cojuangco-owned Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac province.

"I expect that to the first few months, that's what people would be asking. But I think it's hard to pinpoint dynasties to the Aquinos. It's not like one person is being passed on to a child or one in a locality. Because what we talk about dynasties, it's usually because they also own the business here and they are patronizing their universe," Bam said.

"The Aquinos have no holdings there and I am for distributing Luisita," he said.

Many Aquino was a potential President before he was assassinated in 1983. His wife, Corazon Cojuangco-Aquino, was catapulted into power after the 1986 EDSA Revolution. Their son is the current President, Aquino "Sam" Aquino and Sam Aquino-Oreta were former senators.

Bam said he had something to offer—different from what the other Aquinos in the Senate exposed—as a youth leader and social entrepreneur. "What we are really aligned to is tackling what's best for the country. Its BIG," he said.

Aquino only became President when there's a crisis," he said when asked if he was eyeing the presidency. "And I don't want another crisis to happen in our country."

Bam articulated his positions on numerous issues and answered questions directly.

No to Charter change

On the proposed lifting of economic restrictions in the Constitution: "I don't think we should have Charter change. We are just experiencing some level of stability now. We don't want to jeopardize that by having a potentially disruptive process."

On the reproductive health (RH) bill: "I am for RH bill not because I see it as the answer to our development problems but because I believe couples should be able to decide on family planning on their own."

Will the LP backslide by campaigning? "Honestly, we haven't talked about that."

Is Kris Aquino going to enter politics, too? "Kris is not planning to run for any position."

Will you sing and dance during the campaign? "I will but when it's do."

Bam graduated summa cum laude with a degree in management engineering from Ateneo de Manila University. He has received various awards, such as Young Global Leader and International Entrepreneur of the Year by the World Economic Forum and as one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men of the Philippines.

He was chair of the National Youth Commission under the Arroyo administration, during which he met Tina Cuneta whom he will marry on Sept. 15 in Baguio City.

"In a sense, it's politically incorrect because we decided to get married before the campaign," Bam said in jest. "We want to do it together, not for political gains but for marital gains."

Hagonoy

According to Bam, all national issues are youth issues—employment, health, environment and even agriculture.

His work with Hagonoy was his proof that poverty alleviation through social enterprises could be done, he said, adding that he would continue to be involved in the program whatever the outcome of his Senate bid might be.

Bam said his biggest obstacle in his election bid was, "I am a new face," which he quickly corrected to "I am a renovated," when his opponent reminded him of his uncle Winny Aquino was painted over. He even portrayed Winny in the documentary "The Last Journey of Ninoy."

Told that he was too young and there might be many talented and innovative possible candidates who should be fielded, he replied, "There by all means, let talented and innovative people engage in politics."

The problem is those people do not have an Aquino name to piggyback on, or the resources or influence of a party in power. There's an antidynasty provision in the Constitution to address this problem. But efforts to pass an enabling law have never gone beyond first base, so it won't.

BAM AQUINO: "The Aquinos have no holdings there and I am for distributing Luisita."

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'I'm not sure if I'm on LP ticket'

By GIC Catacutan

BEING the President's cousin is no ticket for a slot on the administration's coalition slate for the 2013 senatorial elections.

In an interview with the Inquirer's editorial team on Tuesday night, social entrepreneur Paolo Benigno "Bam" Aquino IV said that he himself was not certain he would be among the 12 candidates to be chosen by the top brass of the Liberal Party (LP).

"You really can't be sure if I'm in. All of us have to go through the LP selection process," Aquino said, referring to senatorial aspirants that include those mentioned by President Aquino as his favorites.

The young Aquino said that while his candidacy had the blessing of the President, he had been told to go through the selection process.

He said the LP selection team—composed of the President, Interior Secretary Mar Roxas and Budget Secretary Florencio Abad Jr.—would make the announcement in two to three weeks.

Aquino was supposed to be sworn into the LP on Aug. 21—the anniversary date of his uncle, former Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr.—but the sudden demise of former Secretary Jesse Robredo forced the party to postpone the event.

Robredo was supposed to be a key member of the LP selection team and Aquino was banking on his vote to get included. With Robredo gone, Aquino's inclusion has become less than certain.

"I think they are looking for a balance between winnable and fresh-faced candidates. I will be the youngest among the known candidates and the youngest candidates seem to be popular among voters," Aquino said.

He said the LP had drawn up a short list of at least 16 candidates (including himself), to-wit: Rep. Juan Edgardo Angara, Customs Commissioner Rufino Biazon, Movie and Television Review and Classification Board head Grace Poe-Llamanzares, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority chief Joel Villanueva, former Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros, and former Senators Jinggoy Estrada and Loi Ejercito.

The LP's coalition partners—Nacionalista Party's Coalition and Nacionalista Party—are demanding a minimum of three slots each in the slate. The LP is also trying to include reelectionist Senators Pamfilo Lacson, Loren Legarda, Antonio Trillanes IV, Alan Peter Cayetano and Sgudino Ejercito Estrada.

Aquino, however, would not say whether he would continue his bid as an independent race next or postpone it to 2016. Aquino said he was keen on running as an LP candidate as of now.

JOB
JOB

Samar folk defy order to leave tsunami zone

From page A1

Lino refuses for family's house used to be in the spot licking cows, men, women and children picked through the debris, looking for materials to salvage from their splintered wooden houses.

The town faces the Pacific Ocean on the country's eastern seaboard, where the powerful earthquake struck. Triggering a tsunami alert that forced more than 200,000 people to coastal areas up to eastern Mindanao is five.

"We thank the Lord that no big waves came, but still, the earthquake destroyed our house," Rivera said.

"It was so strong we were thrown off our bed and minutes later our front and walls crumbled," she said.

Here was among 80 seaside homes built six miles using government and armed, common areas in the county's coastal areas across the country.

Repeated warnings

Nilandro Evalle, a barangay captain in General Macarthur, said the local government had repeatedly warned people to relocate to safer areas inland.

"All of their houses have been destroyed, and now they are trying to rebuild on the same spot," he said. "But what happens when another earthquake or tsunami comes? That would be nightmare."

The quake spurred tsunami warnings from as far away as Japan, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. But only waves of up to half a meter hit parts of the Philippines' eastern coast, not high enough to cause any damage.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRMC) in Manila said most of the homes destroyed were those made of light materials, while overall damage to infrastructure remained minimal.

The NDRMC said Typhoon Ramon had the quake arrived as another reminder for many local governments to improve disaster preparedness and relocate entire villages away from danger zones.

"We are lucky this time. But we can't remain on land all the time," he said. "We also understand that (politically) it is easier to say they will relocate communities, but it is more difficult to implement."

Biggest challenge

"That's the biggest challenge, how to convince them to relocate to safer areas," Evardone told the bayanan in a phone interview.

One solution, he said, is for local governments to build schools, health centers and other public facilities in places far from harmful zones.

Since people frequently use public facilities, they would be inclined to move near such facilities, away from danger zones, he said.

Damage

Evardone, a former governor of the province, spoke about new local official whom he did not name but praised for showing political will and cooperation in entire community. He official, he said, bought a piece of land near schools and other public facilities and moved the community there.

The Office of Civil Defense said the earthquake, which struck 152 kilometers east of Guiuan, in the Philippine Trench, caused more than P11.8 million in damage to public and private infrastructure in the province.

Damaged were the Lapag bridge in barangay Cansoy, San Julian, which was completed in 2010, the Buenavista bridge in Mercedes, and the San Eduardo bridge in Oras. Cracks were also found on the highway in Del Remedio, Salcedo town.

The damage to the bridges is estimated at P3 million, to Lapag bridge, P4 million and to Buenavista bridge, P3 million.

The earthquake also damaged the Weight Belt Barangay Road, which would cost P1 million to repair; the junction of the Bantayantay-Lawaan Road, P500,000; and the junction of the Tell-Oras-San Policarpio-Arteche Road, P800,000.

Evardone said President Aquino and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) had visited him than the roads and bridges in the province that the quake had damage would be repaired immediately.

Aftershocks

Not all who fled their homes when the tsunami alert was raised were going back. Some said 300 families remained in various evacuation centers in two towns in Eastern Samar.

"Those who remained in evacuation centers feared for their safety, as more than 200 aftershocks had been reported since Friday night," Ramos said.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) has recorded 177 aftershocks in the Visayan and Mindanao areas since the quake struck at 8:47 p.m. Friday.

Phivolcs Director Renato Solidum said the aftershocks may last for several weeks or months after the main seismic event.

"The aftershocks that we are expected to be strong but will lessen in magnitude and frequency after some time," Solidum said.

Ramos said the remaining evacuees were housed in public schools, gymnasiums and covered

> *Sorry, but Phivolcs is not on Twitter*

From page A1

struck off the country's eastern coast on Friday night, netizens let the keys to access the website of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) for confirmation of the tremor on the network news.

But if the Pacific-wide tsunami warning that the province had spun without harm right, they would have been swept away without seeing even a flicker from the Phivolcs website.

The Phivolcs page wouldn't load.

People lined to load its Website on Twitter, perhaps to find it.

CNN World Weather anchor Mari Flores was one of those who had been looking and ended up tweeting in frustration: "Is PHIVOLCS on twitter? I can't get into their webpage. . . #PH - French Quake #Philippines."

Sorry, but Phivolcs has no Twitter account.

Asked for an explanation, Phivolcs Director Renato Solidum said a lot of internet users tried to access the agency's website after the powerful quake struck, but its bandwidth could not accommodate the huge traffic.

"The truth is we have a large bandwidth, most larger than the regular bandwidth, but that bandwidth is shared with our mail people," Solidum told the reporter.

But Solidum said Phivolcs was even instructed on the real-time flow of information in the concerned agencies, including the Office of Civil Defense, which would issue advisories and warnings to residents of areas on earthquake fault struck.

"We did don't realize when the flooding attack came but not right now, we advise to increase our capacity and get agreement (on...so people can be directed to the server also without affecting our operations," Solidum said.

As for a Phivolcs Twitter account, the scientific agency did not have enough staff members to provide updates of seismic activity.

"What we do is we give the updates to the concerned agencies, which (then post) the updates on Twitter," he said.

Solidum said the Phivolcs was even instructed on the real-time flow of information in the concerned agencies, including the Office of Civil Defense, which would issue advisories and warnings to residents of areas on earthquake fault struck.

Will new Interior Secretary Mar Roxas have full control of DILG?

From page A1

Aquino Cabinet, the revamp also put three key Liberal party-faithful to the hands of the President's Liberal Party (LP).

Apart from Roxas, who is the LP president, Mr. Aquino also appointed Rep. Jose Emilio Agustin Abaya, the LP secretary general, as the new head as secretary of the Department of Transportation and Communications. On his chief term as Cavite representative, Abaya was chair of the House committee on appropriations. He was also an ally-booster, as a young naval officer. He graduated from the US Naval Academy in Annapolis), in their President Cory Aquino. The third portfolio is held by Budget Secretary Florencio Abad, the keeper of the purse strings and a confidante in the Aquino presidency.

From most industries, the revamp was a snap by the LP on the Cabinet. It clearly marked the expansion and consolidation of the influence of the Liberal Party in the policymaking of the Aquino administration.

This development is for less reassuring to students of party-based democracy than one man rule democracy, driven by political reductionism.

The demise of Robredo and the reshuffle that it triggered came at a time when the administration faces a turbulent discussion in May next year for part of the Senate and local offices—the first electoral test that will define the strategic importance of the DILG in cementing electoral support for the administration when its popularity is shown by opinion polls to be waning.

The new appointments have been criticized as a preparation for Roxas in the 2013 presidential election—a criticism that does not address the relevant issue of what skills and expertise Roxas can bring with him to the DILG, a highly political job in view of the 2013 midterm elections.

According to House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II, Roxas and Abaya were appointed because "they have the strength of character, integrity and administrative capability to handle their respective jobs." Gonzales said the two would serve as an "effective bridge" between the President and local officials.

Both Roxas and Abaya enjoy the trust of the President, and their service records are not tainted with involvement in corrupt practices. As a redeeming feature of their appointments, both have a technocratic outlook and belong to the class of officials who have a modern, caring outlook on governance.

In appointing Roxas to the DILG, Mr. Aquino admitted Roxas' prowess by merging the latter's role as LP president with that as head of arguably the most powerful Cabinet portfolio when it comes to the Philippine National Police and local governments for purposes of political control by the central government.

No stranger to political tasks

Before Roxas was appointed in June 2011 as secretary of transportation and communications, he was a senator, elected in 2004 with the highest number of votes, boosting his field a 1st term of incumbency. Although he lost the 2010 election as vice presidential running mate of Mr. Aquino.

Roxas had been secretary of trade and industry in the Joseph Estrada administration. Roxas rebels he resigned at the height of Edsa II in 2001 triggered by a corruption scandal involving the president himself.

His mixed experience in the legislature and in the executive department gave to show Roxas is not a stranger to the political tasks demanded by his new appointment. He has therefore a political clout based on his record consistency to influence policy in the Aquino administration.

Roxas is a well-versed by educational training and background; he is a graduate of the Wharton School of Economics in the United States where he was an economics major. Roxas' first job was as an investment banker in the Philippines to take up government jobs.

How he will fare as a political trouble-shooter for the LP is a big test for Roxas' political skills. Roxas' popularity is associated with the LP since the party of Mr. Aquino's father, the martyred Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. Roxas' grandfather, former President Manuel A. Roxas, was founder of the LP which split from the oldest Philippine party, the Nacionalista Party.

Roxas has acknowledged to reporters he was stepping into the big troubles (slippers) of Robredo, referring to the leader-member of Naga, who earned a dipper to work and public savings.

Cast in different molds

It would be comical and ridiculous for Roxas to emulate the leftist style of Robredo, whose elder-statesman reputation outmatching achievements as Naga City mayor for 10 years rather on his impact on national politics, except as a catalyst of the current Cabinet revamp to make room for Roxas in the capital of political reform and change.

Roxas and Robredo are cast in different molds. Roxas can not make a success of his job as DILG chief by acting as a clone of Robredo instead where the administration has been a performance of Roxas' own. Robredo's popularity was cultivated with the LP and made it the leaky "ruling party" in the Aquino regime.

One wonders whether Roxas would be similarly undermined by the President. This is still a cause of uneasiness of Roxas to the LP and make it the leaky "ruling party" in the Aquino regime.

MVP, Ayala eye takeover of Metro Rail Transit Line 3

From page A1

Transportation and Communication (DOTC) on Aug. 29, MRP president Jose Ma. Lim told reporters.

Apart from getting the Ayalas onboard, the new proposal attends a previous framework submitted by MRC for consideration by the DOTC, which is now under Secretary Joseph Emilio Abaya.

Being an unsolicited proposal, Lim said the legal framework for the proposal was a bit different from MRP's previously suggested blueprint. He said this would respect existing contracts governing the operations of the 16.9 kilometer railway that runs from North Avenue in Quezon City to Taft Avenue in Pasay City.

Previous offer, fare hike

In its previous offer submitted in 2011, MRP asked to be given rights to manage the train line until 2048, extending MRT's current build-operate-transfer contract by 15 more years.

The company said it would raise fares to P35, or double the current minimum rate of P15 before some way end-to-end trip.

Because current fares are not enough, the government also enjoys a subsidy of at least P5.5 for every train passenger on the MRT route to cover power consumption, personnel expenses and other overhead costs. This adds up to about P3 billion a year, the DOTC said.

"In the first proposal, it's the assumption of the existing contracts. We will take over the company and request it under the rights," Lim said on the additions of the shareholders' association of the Philippines membership meeting.

New concession

"Under this one, we have it as DOTC to give us a new concession overlooking the existing contracts. It would also allow the government to expand the capacity earlier," Lim said. "It's much flexible in the sense that it allows the government in increase the capacity as quickly as possible for the benefit of the public."

Asked whether this new proposal would inconsistent with the existing LRT Line 1 from Monumento to Baclaran, Lim said "it was not specifically emphasized but it was the intention to integrate it" to complete the railway loop.

For his part, Ayala Corp. managing director Fida Francia said in a text message to the business on Sunday: "This proposal entails adjustments to MRP's original submission and will involve capacity expansion. The initiative should benefit Filipinos, would fall within our rail joint venture."

Fil-Estate

MRP obtained a foothold in MRT3 after signing a "cooperation" agreement with the Fil-Estate group and others to either buy their shares or take over their voting rights, giving it an equity control of at least 61 percent and voting rights of more than 70 percent in the consortium.

The Fil-Estate-led consortium, however, no longer holds economic rights to MRT3 as the cash flow from the railway had been committed to creditors under a reconstruction deal. The bulk of the debt papers of Metro Railway Transit Corp. (MRTC), which holds the build-lease-transfer contract on MRT3, is held by the state-owned Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) and Land Bank of the Philippines.

MRC has long been interested to taking over the MRT3 concession, beginning with a partnership with the Hi-Eisai group, the local MRT3 people, prior to the Fil-Estate takeover. However, no longer has economic rights to its cash flows.

Under the old proposal, MRC sought to create new cash flows by doubling the capacity of MRT3. The group sought a 30-year MRT3 concession, which is estimated to require $650 million in investment, of which $100 million will be in equity contribution for the expansion of railway capacity and $550 million for the acquisition of rolling and some of the bonds issued by MRTC.

Buy out DBP and Landbank

Part of the earlier proposal was to buy out the interests held by DBP and Landbank, which own a combined 31 percent of equity in the MRT3 project for 75 percent of economic rights through bonds holders.

The former DOTC chief, Mar Roxas, who was recently named DILG secretary, has expressed interest to buy out the MRT3 concession for local use.

Swiss challenge

If and when the DOTC accepts the MRC-Ayala framework as an unsolicited proposal, it will be subjected to a "Swiss" challenge, which means other bidders will have the chance to top its offer but as original proponent, the group will have the right to match the first offer.

MRC also wants to double the capacity of the MRT3 system to 750,000 passengers a day from the current 350,000 while the purchase of new cars, upgrading of signaling equipment, improving the frequency of train departures and lengthening the number of cars per train.

For its part, the Ayala group has expressed interest to run existing in MRT3 even before establishing an alliance with MRC. In property rent, Ayala land has zoned to be a minority stakeholder in the railway consortium.

10-rail projects

The MRT3 system is just one of the 10 potential railway projects in Metro Manila that the newly created alliance between the Metro Pacific and Ayala group want to participate in. The targets include the Light Rail Transit Railway Transit 3 extension project, from Buendia to Cavite, which is included in the government's public-private partnership pipeline for this year.

The 10 railway projects refer to a master plan made by the DOTC for rail lines in Metro Manila.

Although Some roads in the telecommunications business, both the Pangilinan and the Ayala groups teamed up for railway projects, leveraging their network expertise in running public utilities such as water infrastructure services as well as toll road operations and management. With a report from Paolo Montecillo

Widow agrees to Aug. 18 as Robredo Day in Naga

By Jean Encinas Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

NAGA CITY—The widow of the late Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo has given her nod to declare Aug. 18 as Robredo Day in Naga City.

Vice Mayor Gabriel Bordado and Councilor Jesse Belmonte filed the ordinance declaring Aug. 18 as Robredo Day the day his plane went down off the coast of Mariveles, Bataan, in the original plan to commemorate him as his birthday.

Leni assured the late Sec. M. Robredo Day on the day of the crash to remember his love, valor and service for Naga City on May 27, which is also the foundation day of the province of Camarines Sur that is being celebrated with the "Kinaiyahan Festival," Bordado said on Saturday.

Bordado also confirmed the plan to put a marker to where Robredo's plane crashed, to coordinate with the city and provincial governments of Bataan.

The city officials also believed it would be more appropriate to name the bridge in Barangay Kabihug, Pasacao, after Robredo, Aug. 317 is Heroes' Day," Bordado added.

The city council also considered renaming the Naga City Institute of Good Governance, a Peso Bordado city government unit created when Robredo was mayor, to Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Good Governance.

Bordado said Leni had also offered to give to the city government Robredo's personal effects including books, documents, photos, citations, medals and trophies.

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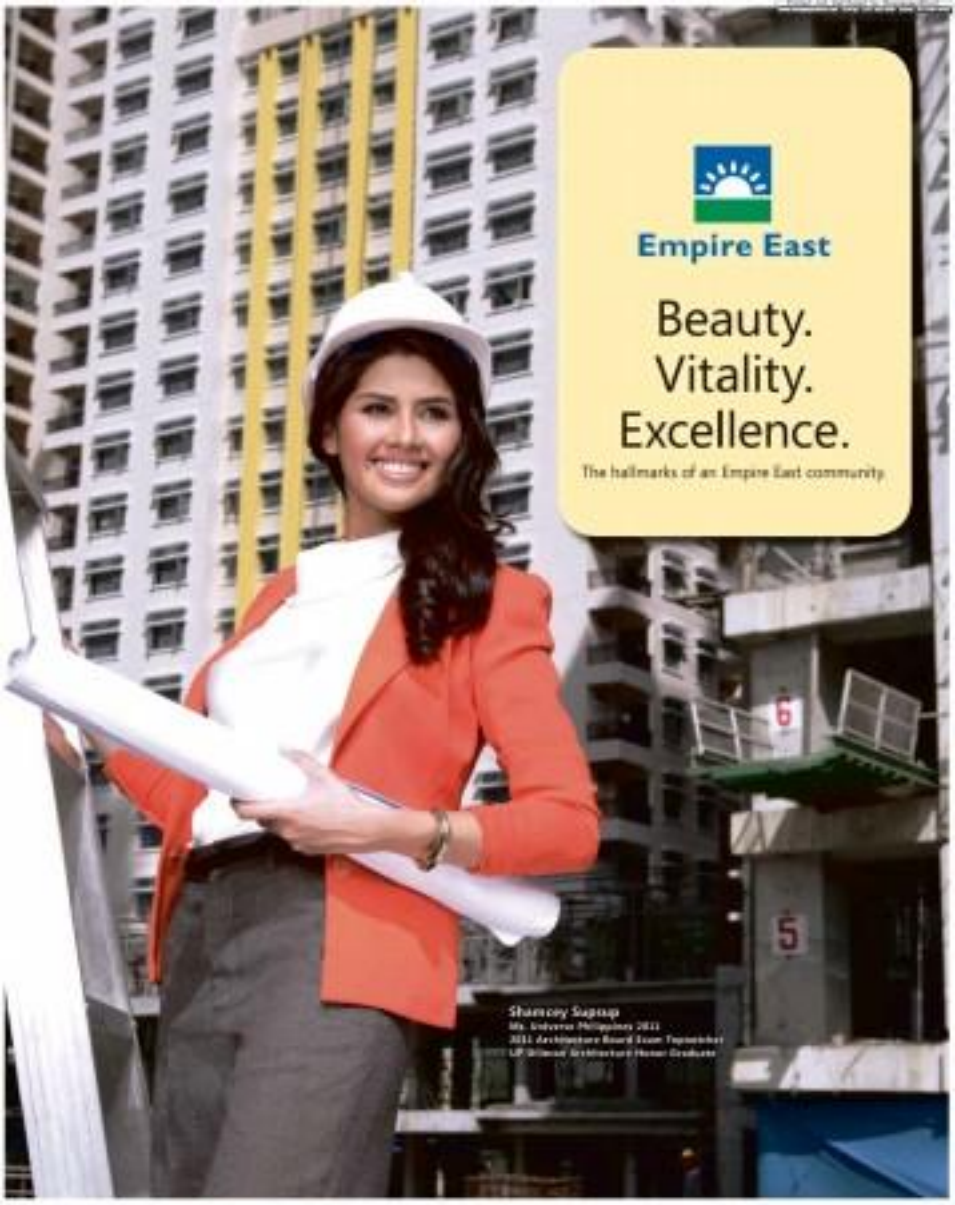

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Editor Joseph Voltaire L. Contreras

DID YOU KNOW

MARIKINA streets on Tumana Molatio and Timog Avenues in Quezon City were named after a group of Filipino Boy Scouts who died in a plane crash in 1963 on their way to an international jamboree in Greece. A monument was also built in their honor at the Timog and Tumana Molatio intersection.

Edwin Gocolay, Inquirer Research

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IN WRONG PLACE AT WRONG TIME

Teen couple killed

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A TEENAGER and his 14-year-old girlfriend were just talking in front of the former's house in Quezon City when they were shot and killed by motorcycle-riding men on Saturday night.

According to a police investigation, the armed men's target was apparently 16-year-old Marlon Motilde. His girlfriend, Marian Tenebla, just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, he added.

The shooting took place at 9 p.m. on Saturday at the corner of Atlanta Extension and Lanzaport Streets, Unit 5, Barangay Greenmeadows.

Both victims were residents of the same barangay. They died on the spot due to multiple gunshot wounds.

PO2 Robbies Camago of the Quezon City Police District's Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit said that the couple were seated outside Motilde's house, just talking to each other when they were approached by two men on a motorcycle.

One of the motorcycle riders immediately alighted from the vehicle and fired upon the victims.

Although wounded, the victims tried to run away but the gunman caught up with them and fired more shots.

At this point, the other motorcycle driver approached the couple and shot Motilde in the head. The two armed men then got back on their motorcycle and escaped.

Some of the Crime Operatives have recovered three bullet casings and a slug from a cal. .45 pistol as well as seven bullet casings from a 9-mm pistol.

Motive under investigation

Camago told the Inquirer that the motive for the attack on the couple remained under investigation.

He pointed out that according to a witness, the armed men initially approached Motilde.

"It is possible that they were intended to kill Motilde but when they had to get him, too because she might have recognized them," he said.

The police official added that they have launched a search for the two gunmen.

Residents block oil depot transfer

By Erika Sauler

SEVERAL residents living near the Pandacan oil depot in Manila are opposed to its transfer as they fear that they will be the next to be evicted once the ordinance which pushes for the facility's transfer is implemented.

"What will happen to us if the oil depot [is] kicked out? We can be ejected, too because there are rumors that a shopping mall will be built here once the depot is gone," Leticia Perez of Barangay 829 told the Inquirer recently.

"When they go, we go," Barangay 826 watchman Aniel Arcilla said in a separate interview, adding that he had also heard reports about plans for the construction of a mall in the area.

Unlike residents of Barangay 814 who have titles to their lots, those from Barangay 826 are living on government property.

Perez belonged to residents about the dangers posed by the oil depot to residents in the Pandacan district...the primary reason cited by Manila councilors who created piety laws

OIL DEPOT, A2b

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Couple accused of abusing maid can't leave PH

By Julie M. Aurelio

A QUEZON City court has issued a hold departure order (HDO) against a couple charged with maltreating their former homemaid until she went blind.

Judge Germano Francisco Lagunju of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 77 granted last week the petition filed by the prosecution which sought the issuance of an HDO to prevent Reynaldo and Analiza Mariano from leaving the country.

He also directed his staff to ensure that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Bureau of Immigration would be furnished copies of his order.

The Marianos are charged with serious illegal detention for conspiring to lock up their former maid, Bonita Ramo, inside their home in Quezon City from June 2009 until May 2010.

Ramo lodged the complaint against the couple with the help of the Public Attorney's Office, who said that she was hired in 2009 and that Analiza began maltreating her in April 2010.

The abuses ranged from choking her, burning her nose with a hot iron and pouring cold water on wounds, on her bones and wounds.

In addition, Analiza reportedly punched Bonita's eyes until her sense of sight was affected. They finally let her go home in May after the latter almost bled to death.

In her sworn affidavit, the court junked the Marianos' motion for a reinvestigation, judicial determination of probable cause and the recall of the arrest warrants issued against them.

This was after the court learned that the Quezon City Prosecutors' Office had already denied the couple's motion to reopen the case.

Earlier, Lagunju ordered the Marianos' arrest which he had recommended for their provisional liberty.

The couple were allowed during the hearing but in an interview with reporters, their lawyer Jose Fernandez said that he would advise his clients "to face the music and the charges [against them.]"

In addition to the charge of serious illegal detention, Analiza was also charged with two counts of attempted homicide and seven counts of serious physical injuries.

However, the complaint against Reynaldo as an accessory to serious illegal detention and attempted murder were dismissed due to lack of evidence.

Senate urged to move to QC

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE SENATE may relocate to another Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) property in Quezon City.

The Quezon City government has offered a three-hectare idle lot in the Philcoa area as a possible location for a new Senate building.

The property in Diliman, which is owned by GSIS, is located at the corner of Elliptical Road and Commonwealth Avenue near Philcoa District.

In a statement, Mayor Herbert Bautista said he had ordered city hall officials to inform Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile of the 29,957 sq m lot which used to be part of the five National Government Centers.

"The GSIS property in Philcoa is a good location for the Senate of the Philippines, that's why we should offer this to the Senate President to be the nation's children's permanent home," he added.

The proposed site is about seven kilometers away from the House of Representatives complex in Batasan Hills.

The Senate is looking for a new home which is closer to the House for better coordination among legislators.

The Senate is currently housed in the GSIS complex on Reyes Boulevard in Pasay City.

Bautista said the site is available because the Philcoa GSIS property is considered as an institutional zone under the city's zoning ordinance.

He also expressed hope that the Senate's transfer to Quezon City would bring economic benefits and boost the development of the city's own Central Business District.

Oil depot transfer hit

From page A1

in vote in favor of the ordinance.

"I am 72 years old and no major disaster has happened here. Besides, the oil companies are a great help to us. They give scholarships to our children. If not for them, who would help us?" she said.

Her statements were backed up by other residents interviewed by the Inquirer.

According to them, the oil firms have provided them with livelihood training and other benefits such as free food during holidays. They also regularly conduct safety and fire seminars, they added.

"We were bombed during the Japanese occupation and even then, the oil depot did not explode," Ayella said.

Last week, the Manila City Council passed on third and final reading an ordinance which reclassifies the area where the oil facility is located from an industrial to a commercial zone, paving the way for the closure of the depot which are under the category of heavy industrial.

The oil facility supplies about half of Luzon's fuel needs and 65 percent of Metro Manila's gasoline and diesel requirements.

Navotas pumping stations ready for floods

By Nathaniel R. Hellcat

PUMPING stations in Navotas City which were damaged during last month's torrential monsoon rains are now back in service, according to the city government, which also announced its plan to add more defenses to further prevent flooding in coastal communities.

Navotas Mayor John Rey Tiangco said that the pumping stations in Barangays Bangkulasi and North Bay Boulevard South have been repaired.

"We are now doing constant preventive maintenance for all our 22 pumping stations," he told the Inquirer in a recent interview.

Tiangco explained that the breakdown of the two pumping stations coupled with damaged river dikes, led to last month's floods at the height of heavy rains.

"We could have avoided much of the flooding if the pumping stations were working. But because they were not at the time, there was too much water for the other pumping stations to cope with, especially as the river walls were breached too," he said.

Meanwhile, work is still underway to rehabilitate the damaged river walls along Barangays Bangkulasi and Dagat-dagatan South.

"Some were the ones which were really damaged severely. We have piled up sandbags in the breached areas temporarily," Tiangco said.

He added that city government was planning to add six more pumping stations to deal with floods.

"We already have funds for it. The first station which will become operational is in Tangos. Construction is nearly finished there," he said.

The city government is also coordinating with the Department of Public Works and Highways for the construction of a seawall fronting Manila Bay.

The seawall, when finished, will cover Barangays Daanghari, San Jose, San Roque, Tangos, and Tanza and will join the area from north navigue and the high tide.

Carjacking victim's father wants to face son's killer

By Marlon Cinco

Inquirer Southern Luzon

THE FATHER of slain car dealer Vernon Evangelista yesterday said he wanted to face his son's alleged gunman, Rolando Talban, who was arrested last week in Cavite province.

"I will face him and show him pictures of my son's gruesome death. Maybe that will make him feel guilty," Arsenio Evangelista told the Inquirer in a phone interview.

Talban, the supposed hit man of the notorious Dominguez carjacking group, was arrested on Wednesday morning in Barangay Bucal 1, Dasmariñas City.

Detained for the murder of Vernon and that of another car dealer, Emerson Lozano, he tried to elude arrest by introducing himself as the arresting officers as Wilson Mendoza, a native of Dasmariñas, Batangas.

However, the police were able to confirm his real identity based on a tattoo on his left shoulder and a scar from an old gunshot wound, the source said.

Members of the Philippine National Police's Highway Patrol Group had put up a P600,000 bounty for the arrest of Talban, the primary suspect in the murders of Vernon and Lozano whose shared bodies were recovered in Central Luzon in January 2011.

Talban is also wanted for the murder of Dennis Teodoro in Caloocan, Quezon City, also last year.

It was also in Dasmariñas City where the bodies of Alfred Mendiola, the chief car witness against the car theft gang, and of two other men, were found in May.

The Dasmariñas police were responding to reports about a shooting incident in Barangay Bucal 1, but when they arrived at the scene, they found Talban being held by an angry mob which had also stabbed him, according to a city police report obtained by the Inquirer.

This area allow he went to avoid a silver Toyota Innova from its owners and left one of its passengers wounded.

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Imam held for framing girl in Pakistan blasphemy case

ISLAMABAD—A Pakistani cleric who fabricated evidence against a Christian girl accused of blasphemy has been arrested on suspicion of evidence-tampering and obstructing the course, police said Sunday.

The girl, Rimsha, has been in custody since she was arrested in the poor Islamabad suburb of Mehrabad more than two weeks ago accused of burning pages containing verses from the Koran, in breach of Pakistan's strict blasphemy laws.

Hafiz Mohammad Khalid Chishti, the imam of the mosque in Rimsha's area who first tabled over evidence, was arrested on Saturday after his testimony told a magistrate he had collected pages from the Koran that he had seen Rimsha burning, police said Sunday.

"The imam was arrested after his deputy Khalid Zubair and two others told a magistrate he added paper from the Koran to the burnt pages brought to him by a witness," police investigator Munir Hussain Adhi said.

Zubair and the two others, Muhammad Mukhtiar and Aftab Ahmed, told police they had urged Chishti not to interfere with the papers, Adhi said.

"They protested that he should not add something to the evidence and he should give the evidence to the police as he got it and should not do this," Adhi said.

CHISHTI

But they said Chishti threatened them if they told anyone.

Rimsha's lawyer has in the only way to expect the Christian from this area."

On August 24 Chishti told AFP he thought Rimsha had burned the pages deliberately as part of a Christian "conspiracy" to insult Muslims, and said action should have been taken against the cleric who refused to collect their "anti-Islam activities" to Mehrabad.

Adhi said the cleric was arrested at his home on Saturday under the blasphemy law.

"By putting these pages in the ashes he also committed destruction of the Holy Koran and he is being charged with blasphemy," he said.

Chishti, who arrived at court on Sunday blindfolded and handcuffed and guarded by armed police commandos, was remanded in custody for 14 days and will be held at the same jail as Rimsha.

Speaking to reporters, Chishti said the allegations against him were "concocted", Rao Abdul Rehman, the lawyer for Rimsha's accused, told AFP. "The police framed the FIR, and the development was intended to "spoil" his case.

A medical report earlier this week said Rimsha appeared to be around 14 years old, which would make her a minor and had a mental age below her true age, but the court has yet to decide whether to accept the assessment.

Some reports have said Rimsha has Down's Syndrome and her case has prompted concern from Western governments and angry Asian rights groups, who warn the blasphemy legislation is often abused to settle personal vendettas.

She is being held in a high-security jail in Islamabad's twin city Rawalpindi and on Friday a judge extended her remand for another two weeks.

Blasphemy is a very sensitive subject in the Pakistan, where 97 percent of the 180 million population are Muslims, and allegations of insulting Islam or the Prophet Muhammad often prompt a furious public reaction. AFP

After attacks, Nato halting training of Afghan recruits

KABUL, Afghanistan—The training of Afghan Local Police and Afghan special operations forces, which account for about 7 percent of all Afghan security forces, has been put on hold for at least a month while their American trainers conduct stricter vetting to try to root out any infiltrators or new recruits who could pose risks to the coalition troops assisting with them, American officials say.

The latest does not affect the vast majority of Afghan forces—more than 350,000 Afghan National Army soldiers and Afghan National Police members—who are still being trained and are still working in the field with American and Nato counterparts, military officials said. The action was first reported earlier by The Washington Post.

"The training is definitely still going on for the regular ANA and ANP," said Brigadier Hefo of the Canadian Air Force, a spokesman for the Nato training mission in Afghanistan. At any given time, there are 25,000 Afghan soldiers and more than 6,000 Afghan national policemen in training, and that is continuing, he said.

But a spate of insider attacks by Afghan forces on American and Nato troops has led American Special Operations commanders in Afghanistan to put a hold on the training of the three Afghan units overseen by American Special Operations Forces: Afghan Local Police and Afghan special border units, which, combined, number some 33,000.

"The training of our partner forces has been paused while we go through this vetting," said a spokesperson for American Special Operations. The spokesperson, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the suspension affects only Afghan local police and Afghan special operations and commando forces.

"It may take a month or two," the spokesperson said, adding that "this is not a permanent pause, it's a precautionary measure. We are still very confident in our vetting procedures."

There are currently slightly more than 16,000 members of the Afghan Local Police, a relatively new program that has near American Special Operations forces integrated units to train Afghan recruits who are not part of the ranks Afghan forces or police. These Afghan Local Police, while comparatively small in number, are regarded as an important stepping to ensure remote corners of Afghanistan are into national reinforcement.

A spokesperson for the American military command in Kabul, Col. Thomas Collins, said the move "should not in any way be perceived as we're backing away from our Afghan partners. We're not."

He added: "We're simply carving up a little space that will allow us and the Afghans to make sure the current vetting procedures are being followed."

American Special Operations forces have suffered devastating attacks in recent months by Afghans close to them. New York Times News Service

Iran, N. Korea sign cooperation deal

TEHRAN—Iran and North Korea have signed an agreement to cooperate in science and technology, Iranian media reported on Saturday, and Iran's supreme leader declared that the two countries had "common enemies." The new countries will cooperate in research, student exchanges and joint laboratories, and in the fields of information technology, engineering, biotechnology, renewable energy, the environment, sustainable development of agriculture and food technology the Iranian Labour News Agency (ILNA) reported.

ILNA said the agreement was signed by Iran's Minister for Science, Research, and Technology Fathol Daneshjoo and North Korean Higher Education Minister Pak Ui-chun.

North Korea has had close ties with Iran. Leaked US diplomatic cables from 2010 showed that US officials believe Iran has acquired ballistic missile parts from North Korea.

Pyongyang's Communist government and Iran's Islamic republic share links to the navy of Revolutionary Guards, once named as part of an "axis of evil" by former US President George W. Bush in his 2002 State of the Union speech.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei also met with South Korea's Kim Yong-nam, seen as a figurehead head of state, who went to Tehran for the Non-Aligned Movement summit held this week.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran and North Korea have common enemies, because the arrogant powers do not accept independent states," Khamenei was quoted as saying by ILNA on Saturday.

Their feud been rumours that North Korean supreme leader Kim Jong-un would attend the summit of developing nations. The Non-Aligned Movement is one of the few multilateral forums in which the North takes part.

Iran's first vice president, Mohammad Reza Rahimi, also called on Saturday for greater economic ties between the country and North Korea, Iranian state television reported. Reuters

Thalidomide victims reject firm's 'insulting' apology

LONDON—Thalidomide survivors on Saturday rebuffed an apology by the German company that manufactured the drug, saying it was an "insulting" response to the thousands born disabled as a result of its use.

In its first apology for the scandal in 50 years, Grünenthal said on Friday it was "very sorry" for its silence towards victims of the drug, which was given to pregnant women in the 1950s and early 1960s to ease morning sickness.

But victims said the apology was too little, too late for the estimated 10,000 children worldwide who were born with deformities—including missing limbs—after their mothers took thalidomide.

"We find what is in essence said genuine apology is not which actually admits responsibility. The company has not done this and has really insulted the Thalidomiders," British victim Nikki Gibbs told BBC radio.

German charities estimate that there are between 5,000 and 6,000 people still living who were deformed by the drug, which was sold in more than 50 countries before it was pulled from the market in 1961 amid one of the world's biggest medical scandals.

Thalidomide babies were often born with missing or extremely short arms and legs. Billed as a "wonder drug" to ease everything from morning sickness to insomnia, thalidomide also caused blindness and malformed organs.

The countries most affected included Germany, Britain, Japan, Canada and Australia. It was not banned in Canada, Japan and Belgium until 1962.

Freddie Authouse, president of the charity Thalidomide UK, said Grünenthal needed to "put their money where their mouth is" and compensate victims rather than simply "saying sorry."

"If they are serious about admitting they are at fault and regret what happened they need to start helping those of us who were affected financially," said Authouse, who was born without arms and legs after his mother took the drug.

Lawyers for Australian survivors described the belated apology as "pathetic". "It is too little, too late and riddled with further deceit," lawyers for Australian victims Lynelle Bowe said in a statement.

"Enough is enough is enough is enough to

A 1961 PHOTO shows a 3-year-old girl born without arms or a German mother who took the drug thalidomide.

die ought to be put down to what shock on the part is touching someone."

The 80 years Grünenthal has been engaged in a calculated corporate strategy to avoid the moral, legal and financial consequences of its medical negligence" reads one of the 1950s and 1960s." Bowe's lawyers said it would have been better for Grünenthal to release its private records to the world, including those it recently handed to court in a class action led by her.

Court papers used in the case allege that the drug's makers were warned of birth defects some two years before thalidomide was withdrawn from the market.

Bowe has reached a multimillion-dollar settlement with another firm that distributed the drug, and her case against Grünenthal is currently on hold.

A Japanese support group for Thalidomide victims also said the apology was not good enough.

"An apology is a matter of course," said Tsuguyoshi Ono, director general of Tokyo Thalidomide Welfare Center in Japan, one of the major countries affected by the drug thrown after Germany and Britain. AFP

SALUDO: A Concert for Heroes

For the benefit of our heroes' children

Every year, Filipino soldiers are killed or incapacitated in line of duty. Our soldiers are compelled by their sworn duty to put their lives in the line of fire even if it means dying and leaving their families to fend for themselves. It is more difficult for the children, whose dreams of a better future die together with their brave winners.

This is where the HERO Foundation, Inc. comes in. HERO, which stands for Help, Educate, and Rear Orphans, was founded in 1988 by the late President Corazon C. Aquino with then Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff Gen. Renato de Villa, as an answer to the growing need to help families of fallen soldiers. The Foundation is presently headed by businessman-philanthropist Fernando Zobel de Ayala as the Chairman of its Board of Trustees.

The HERO Foundation's mission is to provide educational assistance in the form of stipends to children or siblings of Filipino soldiers killed in action (KIA), or totally incapacitated due to combat action. For 24 years, it has provided more than P96 million to 2,261 military orphans to ensure that qualified scholars receive a yearly stipend to support their education. Thousands of military orphans still need educational support as hundreds of Filipino soldiers are killed annually fighting lawless elements and insurgents around the country.

Firmly believing in the cause, many celebrities have shown their support including actor Pido Pascual & top broadcaster Ces Drilon.

In line with this, the HERO Foundation will launch a series of concerts to raise funds that will benefit families of our fallen soldiers. The concert will be staged in different cities all over the country, with its first leg to be timely held in Naga City, home of many heroes, including Naga's modern day hero, the late Secretary Jesse Robredo.

Dubbed "SALUDO: A Concert for Heroes", the concert will kick-off on Sunday, September 9, 2011 at the Naga City Coliseum. It will feature HERO Ambassadors Billy Crawford, Nikki Gil, Isa Villarta and KCydeMind. Joining them are Kris Lawrence, Sheila Valderrama and the NO Band. Organized by ALV Productions and Bonbe Productions, the concert is co-presented by Ian Miguel Corporation, ABS-CBN, Philippine Star, Bicol Mail, Globe Telecom, City Government of Naga, Avenue Plaza Hotel, Crown Hotel, Ago & Sons Group of Companies and Goldprint. This concert for a worthy cause is a wonderful addition every Nagueno could make to their festivities for Our Lady of Peñafrancia.

Proceeds of the concert would help send to school hundreds of orphans of Filipino soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice in the fulfillment of their constitutional duty as protectors of our nation. It doesn't take much to be a HERO to the orphans of our fallen soldiers. This can be our chance to give back to our unsung heroes. Let us make our soldiers know and feel that we truly care. The HERO Foundation invites each one of us to work with them to ensure that the children our soldiers may leave behind will still be given the chance to achieve their dreams.Let us be heroes to the

To learn more, visit www.herofoundation.com.ph or call (632)7-8223(HERO) (4376). Like them on Facebook (Hero Foundation, Inc.) and follow them on twitter (@Hero_Phils).

SA SSS: KABUHAYANG PINAGSIKAPAN, SEGURIDAD MAAASAHAN

55 YEARS !!!!

Since the implementation of the Social Security Law in 1957, the workers, the employers, and the men and women of the Social Security System (SSS) have toiled hand in hand to establish a sound social protection program aimed at promoting social justice in the country. For more than five decades, the cooperation among these groups, plus the inspiration of a government geared towards a straight path, serves as a strong foundation of the SSS as it fulfills its mandate of ensuring protection for its members for 2012 and beyond.

SSS employees attending to Filipino private members.

Today, the pact between us and our stakeholders continues to grow better and stronger. Our commitment to protect the members and their families from life contingencies is further reaffirmed as evidenced by the significant improvements in our financial position and service delivery, and the direction to achieve more, provide more benefits and serve more Filipino workers here and abroad.

Financial Highlights

The year 2011 ended with a landmark P21.2 billion in net revenues, about 12% higher than the P22.8 billion net income in 2010. SSS contribution collections came close to P86 billion, an 8.9% increase from P79 billion from 2010. The higher contribution collections recorded was due to the aggressive collection campaigns, coverage drives, and the expansion of payment channels geared to shift the manual payment of contributions to electronic means.

Despite the low interest rates prevailing in the market, investment income in 2011 likewise posted about P93 billion, an increase of 1.1% from the P92 billion in 2010. Aside from the earnings, our government and private securities, income from investments came from previously maturated loans from securities collateralized under the Loan Condonation Program for Employers (though their employees). The program collected about P1.7 billion in delinquency payments from about 14,000 employers, representing some 160,000 employees.

Meanwhile, expenses had been kept at prudent levels in 2011 despite steady benefit payments of P80 billion, and operating expenses of P7.5 billion increasing 7% and 9%, respectively over 2010.

For the first six months of 2012, the SSS continued the same trend as last year, with net revenues posted at about P49 billion, up by about 92% from the same period last year. Contribution collection is expected to reach a record-high P100 billion by year-end, with about P46.7 billion collected from January to June this year.

Similarly, investment income for the first six months of 2012 has reached P49.3 billion, which is about P1.1 billion or 2.6% higher than the same period last year. Meanwhile, benefits payments reached P42.8 billion which is higher by P1.7 billion or 4%, jump from last year.

With all of these, Jamoral is also committed to take up the challenge of achieving prosperity on the national life through appropriate and prudent fund management. Such will assure members, and future members and their beneficiaries that the SSS will be there to provide protection in the years to come.

Expanding SSS Coverage and Collection

One of the major goals of the SSS is to expand its coverage to include the informal sector workers and other vulnerable workers' groups, increase contribution collection, get members to religiously pay their contributions, and make them realize the value of being SSS members.

Covering the Informal Sector. In November last year, an innovative pilot project called "**#BankSSSit**" was launched in a group of tricycle drivers in Las Piñas City. The project entailed the construction of a piggy bank-like "piggy bank" for these drivers to drop off their daily savings intended for SSS contributions. Such savings was ideal for members who cannot afford to remit their entire monthly premiums in one payment but are able to do so, on a daily basis. The pilot project involved both the Las Piñas branch personnel officers and the members of the tricycle drivers' and operators' association (TODA) to jointly survey the "piggy bank" and remit the accumulated contributions at the end of the month to the SSS.

Since then, the SSS developed and institutionalized the project into a program called "**#BankSSSit**" and is now available not just for tricycle-pedicab and jeepney drivers but also for other informal sector workers like market and sidewalk vendors, independent farmers and fishermen, hairdress, spa and grooming workers who do not have regular incomes and employers but only rely on their daily earnings for their income.

Reaching out to Overseas Filipino Workers. More efforts are geared towards another sector that has a lot of potential and who needs protection — the Overseas Filipino Workers or OFWs. In October last year, two teams of top officials went on an OFW Caravan to the Middle East and Europe to assure the concerns and issues on the ground in order to improve coverage of this market.

A number of these concerns include the need to inform them of the benefits of being an SSS member, where they can remit contributions and convenient channels for them to transact with SSS.

OFW Member-Get-Member Raffle Promo. An offshoot to the Caravan was the launching early this year of the "Member-Get-Member" Raffle Promo which was intended to provide incentives to our active members to encourage their colleagues and fellow OFWs to register with SSS. Monthly draws for cash prizes have been given away since January and grand raffle prizes will be drawn in time for the SSS 55th anniversary celebration, with a travel package consisting of a round-trip ticket to the Philippines from the OFW's host country, posted money, and hotel accommodation for two in Boracay, as first prize.

At the same time, the SSS has opened two more foreign branch offices in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to serve the growing number of OFWs in these areas. Meanwhile, the existing 13 foreign offices are being fortified up with additional personnel to support these offices and their respective labor attaché officer. These will allow longer office hours for the OFWs in the area to be served and have the other employers enabled coverage drives or remote jobsites where the workers are detailed.

MAKING SSS PAYMENTS MORE CONVENIENT. Starting last year, a revised payment schedule was implemented to decongest banks and SSS offices during payment deadlines. The new deadlines for payments were spread within the month depending on the last digit of the SSS number of employers, employers and individually paying members.

Also, more payment channels are being signed up to provide members more convenience. The current channels with improvements with Bayad Center, Chinabank, Old Mutual Mart, and LBC Remit are being extended to allow not just individual payers but also companies or employers. Currently in the pipeline are options for members to electronically pay their obligations thru ATMs, the Internet, and thru SMS or cellphones. At the same time, the following counters at SSS branches are being enhanced to allow immediate posting of collections into the database thereby minimizing errors and the need for reconciliation.

GOING REQUIRED TO SERVE MEMBERS BETTER. Much of SSS' efforts in enhancing member service delivery is in upgrading its information technology infrastructure to provide more convenience to members and to allow transparency and accuracy in member records, but still ensure adequate online security. Thus, the past year saw the movement of SSS service delivery from branch-based transactions towards more online or Internet-based channels. Employers with more than 10 employees, for example, are now required to submit collection lists electronically. By giving members more convenient, speedier access, access to their records, the SSS also empowers them to monitor their own contributions and loan records to ensure correctness, and in case of discrepancies, they can inform SSS immediately for remedy.

Enhanced SSS Website

Online transactions provide members and employers with greater convenience, enabling them to submit applications and requests even beyond regular office hours.

During the first semester of 2012, over 516,000 members and employers enrolled at the SSS website, which reflected a jump of over 68 per cent from only 191,776 new web registrants for the same period last year, bringing total website enrollees to 4.7 million as of June 30, 2012. Among the most popular website transactions is the submission of employers' reports of newly-hired workers and applications for salary loans.

Text-SSS

An alternative to the SSS website as a source of information is the Text-SSS facility that allows members to inquire on their number of contributions, loan eligibility, and loan applications — all via text messages. The enhanced Text-SSS service was launched in February 2010 and it recorded nearly 197,000 transactions during the first half of 2012, up from only 122,994 for the same period of 2011. The expansion of Text-SSS services to cover inquiries on claim status, branch location and requirements for loans, benefits and registration helped boost the number of transactions and registered users. More than 251,000 members have registered in Text-SSS as of June 2012.

May oras ka pa para mabayaran ang iyong utang sa SSS...

Sali Na!

SSS Loan Penalty Condonation PROGRAM

Hanggang September 30, 2012 na lang!

hang paalala mula sa

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

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For further inquiries, you may call the SSS Hotline at 920-6446 to 55. You may also visit the nearest SSS Branch or find us on the Philippine Social Security System Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/SSSPh

the impact of the Text-SSS facility in providing fast and convenient information to members for all its unparalleled honor for SSS Congressional Publishing at Civil-based global media firm, recognized the "Text-SSS" service among its 2012 Honors Laureate Distinction, for its "innovative use of information technology to promote and advance the public welfare, benefit society and change the world for the better."

24-Hour Call Center

Members of the SSS can also make phone inquiries about their contributions, benefits, loans and other SSS concerns beyond regular business hours with the new SSS call center that operates calls for 14 hours every weekday starting May 2013. SSS service personnel are now available to respond to members' inquiries through SSS hotline numbers 920-6401 to 11, Monday to Friday, from 7 a.m. until 11 p.m. There are also 16 trained call center agents to provide 24/7 service to members, especially for overseas Filipino workers who will then be able to call up SSS despite the difference in time zones.

The SSS call center has resulted into more opportunities to serve members, as evidenced by the 35 percent increase in the number of calls received per month since the 16-hour service was started on May 16, 2012. From January to June 2012, the SSS call center handled a total of 108,248 inquiries, a 23-percent jump from the 150,000 calls received in the previous six-month period of July to December 2011.

Another inquiry facility that provides round-the-clock services to members is the Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS), which is an automated phone-based system wherein member key in information, such as their SS number and birthdate, and follow the electronic voice instructions to make inquiries. The SSS received more than 1,247,000 calls under the IVRS during the first semester of 2012.

Electronic release of short-term benefits and salary loans

The SSS plans to shift towards the electronic dissemination of salary loans and short-term benefits from its current system of releasing them through checks. The move aims to provide more convenience and security in the timely delivery of funds to members and employers.

The SSS has started this year its mandatory reimbursement of employers' advances and automatic claims this both accounts of employers all over the country as an initial step. Its ultimate goal is to institutionalize checkless transactions to eliminate problems that may occur with sending checks through mail. It will offer greater convenience for members and employers since they neither have to visit the bank to encash or deposit their checks, nor wait for the required check-clearing period.

The electronic release of loans and benefits will also address problems such as delay in delivery of checks, as well as delays, misdelivery or even outright theft of checks. The SSS recently tied up with Citibank for the electronic release of salary loan proceeds and short-term benefits through a special cash card for members. SSS and Citibank signed a memorandum of agreement at the SSS corporate headquarters on June 5, 2012. The SSS expects to start issuing the new Citi Prepaid Card for SSS Salary Loans and benefits to members within the second half of 2012.

Self-Service Kiosks and E-cenders for easier access to information

To enable members who have neither the means nor the knowhow to transact with SSS electronically, electronic centers (E-centers) manned by member service officers, were set up in two more branches, SSS Pasay and SSS Cebu, for the pilot implementation. The E-centers are equipped with online computers that members can use to register at the SSS website's MyNSO portal. They also house self-service information kiosks through which members can access their records and find out the status of the benefits claims and loan applications with the help of SSS cards.

SSS in the Internet and Social Media. For those active in the web and social media, the SSS can also be reached through email (member_relations@sss.gov.ph), via its pages in Facebook, and YouTube for its instructional "How-to" mini-videos. For the first semester of 2012, over 69,000 emails and 10,000 Facebook online fans were received. Its one-to-one members' enquiries like website access problems, delays in the UMID card, and salary loans.

Tie-up SSS Branches and Service Offices. For members who still need to transact with the branches, the SSS is also rationalizing its branch network to locate them in better locations, standardize services and facilities and open new ones to decongest some. Service offices have also recently been opened in various Robinsons Malls in the metropolis and Luzon area, and eventually in the Visayas and Mindanao areas.

New Programs

While the provisions for benefits and members' loans are mandated by law, the SSS is still free on working for opportunities and new programs to improve its benefit services and make the benefits received meaningful to the members.

Annual Continuation of Pensioners (ACOP). To ensure that right benefits are received by the rightful beneficiaries, the SSS announced early this year the implementation of the enhanced ACOP to validate the continued eligibility of each pensioner to receive SSS benefits by setting them to report to the bank where their pensions are deposited or to any SSS branch to confirm their existence and ensure that reports are updated and wrongfully disbursed pensions are returned, thereby preserving the long-term viability of the funds.

Enhanced Flexi-Fund for OFWs. Recently, the SSS approved the higher guaranteed earnings for Flexi-Fund members to help them save more for their retirement and encourage more OFWs paying at the minimum salary credit of P11,000 to join the program. Under this, a savings program, the Flexi-Fund allows OFWs to set aside part of their earnings for their future, particularly after their job contracts have expired, or upon their retirement.

Educational Loan Assistance Program. Last May 2012, the SSS launched the Educational Loan Assistance Program or "Tulong-Aral", a P2 billion loan program with up P15 million subsidy from the national government and another P15 billion allocation from SSS, to help finance the college education, technical and vocational courses of qualified members, themselves, their spouses, and children. For unmarried members, the program may help finance the education of their siblings.

Loan Penalty Condonation Program. In view of the inquiries from members to re-utilize the Loan Penalty Condonation Program for individuals, the SSS re-offered in April 2012, a different amnesty program for borrowers with overdue salary, calamity, emergency, study-now pay-later, stock investment, and privatization fund loans, subject to certain conditions.

Enhanced [illegible]

In a bid to help boost employment and spur national economic growth, the SSS committed a total of P7 billion for lending to private enterprises, seeking funds for business expansion and social development projects through the newly created Business Development Loan Facility (BDLF) and Social Development Loan Facility (SDLF).

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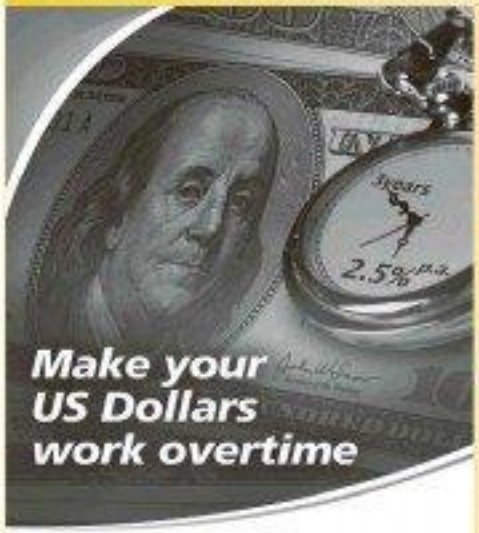

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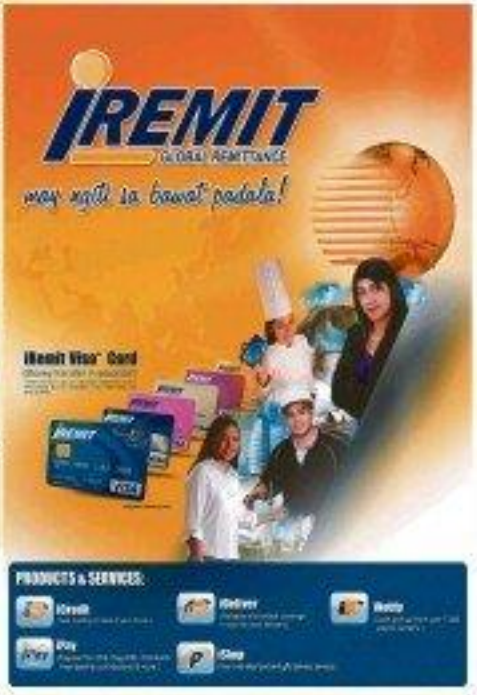

The WORLD

Editor Lamberto B. Quiazo

Syria opposition fighters say they captured air base

BEIRUT—Opposition fighters in Syria said early Saturday that they had captured an air defense base in the eastern province of Deir el-Zour, taking at least 16 soldiers captive and seizing weapons and ammunition in what appeared to be part of a broader rebel offensive against Syrian military installations across the country.

Rebel fighters in the province also attacked a military air base, according to activist groups, the third attack on an air force site in the past few days. Last week, rebel commanders claimed to have destroyed several helicopters during assaults on two regional military airports in Idlib province.

The latest attacks come as the new Syria negotiator for the United Nations and Arab League, nodding to twelve unanimous diplomacy, said he would travel to Damascus in coming days. The representative, Lakhdar Brahimi, a veteran Algerian diplomat, also said he intended to base himself in Damascus if that would be most useful.

"Damascus is the right, natural place to be," Brahimi said in an interview at the UN during his first official day on the job. "Otherwise it will be possible or not is something I'm going to find out."

Videos that activist groups said showed the aftermath of the air defense base attack raised the possibility that rebel fighters had captured shoulder-fired antiaircraft missiles, known as man-portable air-defense systems (Manpads). Enough it was not clear whether some of the missiles had the necessary components to make them functional. One video, uploaded Friday, appeared to show a man holding a complete system.

Rebel groups have been eager to acquire the weapons to counter the government's increasing use of warplanes and helicopters in the conflict. In recent weeks, there have been several sightings of Manpads, possibly smuggled from Libya and relied to rebels on government arsenals.

At the same time, the sightings seem likely to raise concerns about the spread of the weapons, which can also be used against commercial aircraft.

The sightings have included both complete and incomplete missile systems.

The videos from the air defense base, in al-Bukamal, near Syria's border with Iraq, could not be independently verified. They showed rebel fighters strolling through a shattered building, with the bodies of at least two government soldiers lying on the ground. One of the dead soldiers is mustered in what looks like ink. Soldiers stand over another body naked in blood, an unusual policy the dead man's head with a rifle.

After the capture of the base, the opposition groups said that several people were killed when government warplanes attacked the area, raising questions about the rebels' ability to hold the site.

Also on Saturday, Syria's official state news agency said that the government had released more than 300 people it had detained during protest in the Damascus suburbs, Homs, Aleppo and Daraa. The news agency said the detainees had been "involved in recent events" but had committed no crimes.

A reporter with Agence France-Presse who interviewed some detainees as they emerged from a Damascus police station said several appeared to have been beaten. Some left the station wearing soiled but clean clothes and others were shoeless. One detainee said he had spent 32 days in solitary confinement for having a damaged identity card.

In recent days, activists and international filmmakers have expressed concern about the fate of Omar Sirvalbe, a leading figure in Syrian cinema believed to have been arrested at the Damascus airport on Aug. 23.

New York Times News Service

FREE Syrian Army fighters engage with Syrian troops in Aleppo. Syrian troops bombarded Aleppo on Sept. 2 with warplanes and mortar shells as soldiers clashed with rebels in different parts of the city. AFP

Blair, Bush should face trial over Iraq war—Tutu

LONDON—Archbishop Desmond Tutu called Sunday for British ex-leader Tony Blair and former US president George W. Bush to face trial in The Hague for their role in the Iraq war.

The South African peace icon, writing in The Observer newspaper, accused the pair of lying about weapons of mass destruction and said the invasion left the world more destabilized and derailed "clear-cut other conflict in history." Tutu argued that different standards appeared to apply for prosecuting African leaders than western counterparts, and added that the death toll during and after the Iraq conflict was sufficient for Blair and Bush to face trial.

"On these grounds alone, in a consistent world, those responsible for this suffering and loss of life should be invading the international path as some of their African and Asian peers who have been made to answer for their actions in The Hague," Tutu wrote in the weekly Sunday newspaper.

"But even greater cross have been exacted beyond the killing fields, in the hardened hearts and minds of members of the nations fatally across the world." However, Blair responded in a statement saying that "this is the most important one we have had many times such nothing new to say." Bush, a long-standing vocal critic of the Iraq war, had modified Blair last week, polling out of a South African conference on leadership that week because the visa department was unwilling.

The prime Iran said he had supported the court in power, as Blair's "morally indefensible" support of the US-led 2003 Iraq invasion.

The archbishop added on Sunday: "I did not down to appropriate on how this Clarendon.

"At the date close cause I felt an exceedingly profound sense of discomfort about attending a summit on 'leadership with Mr Blair.'" He added: "Leadership and morality are indivisible. Good leaders are the custodians of morality.

"The question is not whether Saddam Hussein was good or bad or how many of his people he massacred. The point is that Mr. Bush and Mr. Blair should not have allowed themselves to stoop to his immoral level.

"If it is acceptable for leaders to take drastic action on the basis of a lie, without an informed religious or moral compass when they are found out, what should we teach our children?"

The Nobel Peace Prize winner also argued that the 2003 Iraq war to oust Saddam Hussein had created the backdrop for civil war in Syria, and a powerful nuclear-Middle East crisis in solving Iran.

"The dare leaders of the US and UK fabricated the grounds to behave like playground bullies and drive us further apart," he wrote.

"They have driven us to the edge of a precipice where we now stand with the prospect of Syria and Iran before us." Blair issued a stern defense on Sunday in response to the article.

"In repeat the old mean-Cohen we find when the intelligence is completely wrong as every single independent analysis of the evidence has shown," he said.

AFP

WISE, PEACE-PRIZE LAUREATE Archbishop Desmond Tutu

'Raindrops Keep Fallin' lyricist Hal David dies at 91

LOS ANGELES—Hal David, the Oscar- and Grammy-winning lyricist who in the late 1950s and early 1960s gave pop music vernacular the questions "What's It All About?," "What's New, Pussycat?," "Do You Know the Way to San Jose?" and "What Do You Get When You Fall in Love?," died Saturday in Los Angeles. He was 91.

The cause was a stroke, according to his wife, Harriet, who said he died at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

David, whose lyrics could be anguished, plain, woeful yearnings, were made to soar any musings, and sometimes all four in the same song, was best known for the long record of hits he and the composer Burt Bacharach wrote for Dionne Warwick.

He was something of a late bloomer: He did not have his first Top 10 hit—"Magic Moments," recorded by Perry Como in 1958, when David was in his late 30s. He achieved his greatest success well after he turned 40, at a time when many of the other successful songwriters were half his age and many young performers were writing their own songs.

David's words also found fertile ground in Broadway in the hits musicals "Promises, Promises"; in the movies, in the Oscar-winning song "Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head" from "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid"; and at weddings via the classic first dance song "(They Long to Be) Close to You."

If David and Bacharach's oeuvre was more cosmopolitan and less hip than that of Bob Dylan, Lennon and McCartney or proclamations of youthful love and heartbreak have nonetheless proved as viable and enduring—after all, not everyone went to Woodstock. Their alternate title was populated on one hand by the battle-hardened martial set, embodied by the likes of Tom Jones (who had a hit with "What's New, Pussycat?") or the debonair Bacharach-Warwick, and on the other hand by the overpassions pair breaking in her first pair of workplace shoes, like the protagonist of "I Say a Little Prayer," who runs "to the bus, dear" and while riding thinks of us, dear."

"I Say a Little Prayer," a hit in the 1967, was the most successful of the three chosen or so singles David and Bacharach wrote and produced for Warwick, whose duty ran in 1963 when they were journeymen on the New York music-publishing scene and she was a 20-year-old backup singer.

After the song on some demo recordings of their songs, a disgruntled Warwick complained to them, "Don't make me over, Sam." David seized the line, and Warwick's recording of the resulting song, "Don't Make Me Over," became her first hit, in early 1963. From then until mid-1971, nearly a month went by when the strains were not represented on the Billboard singles chart, with chestnuts like "Walk On By," "Message to Michael," "Alfie" and "I'll Never Fall in Love Again."

With Warwick's voice in place, David found his own, writing with the intense romanticism of the Tin Pan Alley songwriters he grew up admiring but replacing the literary outlines of, say, Lorenz Hart or Oscar Hammerstein II with conversational vernacular.

Many years later, David wrote on his website that he strove for "believability, simplicity and emotional impact" in his lyrics. His words, combined with the frequent silences of Bacharach's melodies and rhythms, often drew—and required—the most skilled technicians and interpreters of emotion. Among those were Dionne Warwick (Dee Warwick), Gene Pitney ("Twenty Four Hours from Tulsa") and Karen Carpenter ("Close to You").

The two men's songs became so popular that they were also recorded by performers not known for their singing, like the actress Richard Chamberlain, who did a recording of "(They Long to Be) Close to You" in 1963, and the trumpeter Herb Alpert, who oddly gave David his first No. 1 hit, in June 1968, with "This Guy's in Love With You."

New York Times News Service

DAVID

WHAT'S INSIDE
■ Buzzer-beater lifts Tamaraws /A32

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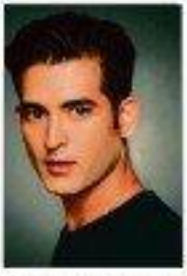
■ Federer, Murray in US Open last 16 /A33

Marco Lobregat on Challenges, Changes and Good Choices



Only a few years after graduating from college, Marco Lobregat was at the peak of his career. Working for the World Eye Reproduction Series, he traveled to different countries to interface with political and business leaders and to gain their insight on business trends and opportunities. There, the global economic recession hit.

Disheartened that the financial world was in shambles, he decided to get out of the corporate world to find his own niche. Wanting to make use of his family's 6.5 hectare property in Laguna, he sought for a high yielding product that he could grow. A trip to the supermarket proved to be his eureka moment, as he considered what role to be the Mickey of Mushrooms.

"I have always loved mushrooms since I was young," he explained. "When I went to Boracay, I noticed that most of the mushrooms were imported. No one seemed to be growing it locally." Taking inspiration from a friend in Spain who grows mushrooms at home as a hobby, Marco raised capital for his business and started his own research.

At first, his only goal was to make sure the mushrooms grow. A mixed with different ingredients, Marco and his partners pressed on to better understand fungi and its different applications. "We failed many times," he admitted. "But it's only then that you find out what to do."

The choice to keep moving forward paid off. They eventually started delivering mushrooms to friends and family. The business grew further as they began to supply local restaurants and other outlets. Soon, they opened their own stall at the Salcedo Market and attracted even bigger clients.

What started as a practical choice quickly became a passion for Marco. "I got more in love with mushrooms, the more I read and check it out," he shares. "Aside from being a super food, mushrooms also have medicinal and environmental benefits. It is for these reasons that the Ministry of Mushrooms aims to build a sustainable, world-class mushroom industry in the Philippines."

Carrying his own motto and working hard for his success instilled in Marco an appreciation for services that deliver great value. A perfect fit for his enterprise is Sun Cellular, with affordable plans providing him more than what he pays for. The first in the market to offer unlimited calls and text, Sun Cellular plans are also loaded with various services that surpass competition.

"Sun has been a second line for a lot of people," Marco said. "And considering its fully loaded plans, reliable connection and expanded coverage, it's about time people make the practical decision and make Sun Cellular their primary line. And for me, it's my good choice."

Garcia buzzer shot lifts Tams

Bulldogs plan to contest defeat

By Jasmine W. Payo

Kit Garcia sealed a buzzer-beating lineup following a mad scramble as the Eastern University escaped with a 77-75 decision over Emilio Aguinaldo College yesterday to grab a share of second in the UAAP men's basketball tournament at Mall of Asia Arena.

Garcia's game-winning basket with 0.1 second time before ruling that Garcia beat the buzzer by just a weak of second.

"It was another heart-attack game," said FEU coach Nerf Flores after the Tamaraws joined Ateneo de Manila University, National University and defending champion De La Salle University with 8-3 records.

The Bulldogs, though, signified their intention to put the game under protest last night. Ismael Marcial, NCA representative to the league board, said the school will endorse the complaint, which should be filed within 24 hours.

NCA's Ray Parks nudged the ball from Garcia with less than 10 seconds left, but the Bulldogs lost possession in a scramble that saw FEU's Roger Pogoy eventually getting hold of the ball and tossing it to Garcia on the other end.

It was a heart-stopping pleasure to Chris Javier who drained a buzzer-beating triple to lift University of the East to a pulsating 79-76 victory over University of the Philippines in another match pitting teams already out of semifinal contention.

Pat Dumaug dished out the key assist to Javier, whose game-winner from the left corner turned out to be his first. Dumaug is stronger in his UAAP career.

Javier, the 6-foot-3 sophomore ace, bailed out the Warriors after the Maroons rallied from a 69-70 deficit to tie the game at 76.

Terrence Romeo paced the Tamaraws with 23 points, including a key triple that gave the Tamaraws a 75-72 advantage with 105 seconds left. Raoul Favores, stepping up in the absence of the suspended Arvie Bringas, added 10 rebounds and eight boards.

UNIVERSITY of the East survived Bel Semerag drives off Scots U's Cris Ball in yesterday's other lucky commend match.

'NC' Final 4 contenders seek crucial wins today

REIGNING MVP Calvin Abueva returns from a one-game suspension as San Sebastian goes for win No. 10, even as Final Four contenders Jose Rizal U and Perpetual Help duke it out today in the 89th NCAA basketball tournament at Mall Flying V Arena in San Juan.

The Stags take on the 5-6 Scottie Hilario at 4 p.m. with Abueva rejoining the squad after sitting it out following a disqualifying foul against Lyceum.

The Bombers and Altas collide at 6 p.m. with both teams jockeying for the inside track to the Final Four race.

The Bombers (9-2) in 8-3 record, while the Altas, who have downed down after winning six of their first eight games, are in fourth with a 7-4 card.

With a 9-3 card, the Stags will be looking to close in on a Final Four berth, while the Blazers are nursing dim hopes of reaching the postseason after winning just one of their last five games.

The Stags barely survived the Blazers, 95-93, in their first-round meeting last June 30 with Abueva falling just a double double of 23 points and 23 rebounds.

The Blazers are hoping to contain the seventeen of their Veteran victory over the Arellano Chiefs last Thursday where forward Bobby Ray Bryd is eyeing high 22 average.

"We can't think about the Final Four right now," said St. Benilde coach Richard del Rosario. "We want to... finish the season well."

Even without Abueva, San Sebastian showed it had more than enough firepower against Arellano: Ian Sangalang and Ronald Pascual picked up the slack, combining for 40 points and 20 rebounds.

The Bombers prevailed over the Altas, 84-50 in their first meeting last July 13.

The Altas are looking to bounce back from a 61-46 loss to Letran.

Gmb@TJ Ryan

Cagayan gains Shakey's V-League semis

By Jasmine W. Payo

CAGAYAN Valley played ruinous in head coach Ian still forged a straight-set triumph over Philippine Navy, 25-17, 25-17, 25-19, to secure a semifinal berth in the Shakey's V-League Open yesterday at Filoil Flying V Arena in San Juan.

Joy Cases scored 14 kills, four aces and a couple of blocks in a 16-point effort that gave the defending Reinforced Conference titlist its 2-1 record.

Sandra delos Santos and Jersey Tolosa combined for 23 points as the Rising Suns joined leaders Smartlogo-San Sebastian (3-0) and defending champion Philippine Army (3-1) in the Final Four.

In the second game, Ateneo outlasted winless De La Salle University, 23-25, 25-23, 25-23, 20-24, 18-16, to boost its semifinal bid.

Alyssa Valdez fired 25 points, including a decisive kill that dominated the 16-16 deadlock in the final frame.

Wilma Salaque also soared in 22 markers, 20 off spikes, to help the Lady Eagles score back-to-back victories.

Ateneo sustained a three-game slide to zero in on the last semifinal slot with a 3-4 card.

Despite the Rising Suns' stunning streak, Cagayan assistant coach Shaneah Mendiola said the team could have pulled off a stronger finish.

"We were lost we didn't close the game the way we expected it," said Mendiola, who called the shots as Mike Ballad rusticated Reprieal Hidy in the NCAA beach volleyball finals.

Cagayan, which has yet to drop a set in its winning run, also overwhelmed Navy on aces, 4-1 (2).

The Lady Sailors skidded to 1-6, while the Lady Tamaraws remained winless in seven games.

Suba cops Asian Karting Senior title

KNOCKOUT WINNER Filipino fighter Eric "The Natural" Kelly scores on a kick against former UFC champion Jens Pulver in their featherweight clash Friday night at Emars Araneta Coliseum. Kelly bested MMA legend Pulver in the second round.

FILIPINO driver Jeuzer John Suba booted a formidable field to grab of the premier Formula 125 Open finale crown yesterday in the third leg of the 2013 Asian Karting Open Championships at Carmona Racetrack in Cavite.

Suba of Eagle Cement Racing Team rocketed ahead in the third lap and held off a furious challenge from Filipino racing bet Mike Rivera and Indonesian Amos Sebastian Noot to complete the 28-lap final in 20 minutes and 33.680 seconds.

Indonesia's Yanes Serena Mamoni of Bali Whale Racing Indonesia and Sudirta Marcello Pratama finished fourth and fifth, respectively, in the event sanctioned by the Automobile Association Philippines.

Suba's impressive win spoiled Indonesia's bid for the crown after Nino topped the prelim time trials in the second round, and Imlah Delia bloodied Swedish Kristopher Persson's nose and got away with a unanimous victory.

But Troy Banting and Hi-Ann Michie Inchausti weren't as lucky.

Former fighter Banting threw chair. Knocked out Berdonio, while Guanzo Jun Urbas Reyes stopped Banting with an anchor.

Mr. Suba raises his hands in the final straight as he clinched the Formula 125 Open Senior crown at Carmona Racetrack in Cavite.

Meanwhile, Japanese Marion Sato came from behind to nip Filipino Rivera of Boss-C and take the 125 Formula Open Juniors.

Sato, who overtook Rivera in the 12th lap, clocked 28 minutes and 28.876 seconds, 1.996 seconds ahead of Rivera.

Jeric Calderon of Red Bull Indarela Racing settled for third followed by Raymund Cedric of HSSM C Racing and Dexter Moore of Indonesia's Dodi Putra.

Sheryl Tilman and Bardabella Heer produced a 1-2 finish for Indonesia in the Mini-ROK race, spoiling the title-retention bid of Hyun Ashley of TSG-Castrol. Jadyn Ross ran in the last laps and secured up fifth.

Jeremy Jared 'JJ' Tesoro of TSG-Castrol Kids also scored wins in the local races.

Cadala ruled the Yamaha Novice, while Tesoro scored a repeat in the Formula Cadet Expert.

Wayne Norman Dawis reigned supreme in the Yamaha Expert class while Jose Luis Lardizabal topped the Cadet Master division.

The event was supported by the Philippine Sports Commission and sponsored by Coca-Cola, Yokohama, Spanco, Vimex, Motorstar and Sweetened. CJP Ryan

Fil-Am Striegl halts foe; 'Hitman' scores

By Jose Navarro

FILIPINO-AMERICAN Mark "Mugen" Striegl made short work of Guam's Robert Wunsig in a one-side featherweight clash that electrified the sellout crowd Saturday night in the PICC6 at Tesoro Sports Arena.

The Hawaii-based Striegl, highly skilled in taekwondo and wrestling, gained control on the ground in a grapple and forced Wunsig to tap out with an arm lock just 1 minute 22 seconds into the fight.

"I knew he's (Wunsig) a tough competitor, that's why I didn't take my chances," said Striegl, who raised his undefeated MMA record to 11-0 in his coming-on party with the ONE.

Lightweight champion Hawis "The Hitman" Sarmiento also didn't let his Filipino MMA foes down, registering not a split decision win over Filipino boxing champ Ishmael Kenneth Ramos in a non-title bout.

Sarmiento punished Ham with counterpunches and took the upper hand in the third and final round en-route to grabbing the unanimous decision victory in 30 fights.

The pride of Ilocos Norte was supposed to defend his belt against Jon Tuck, who withdrew two weeks before the fight due to a training injury.

Ramos was prepared for five rounds," said Sarmiento, 29.

American Russel Doane clinched a majority decision victory over Japanese Hitoshi Sasaki.

Eugene Toquero floored Leonard Cadena with a barrelling elbow early in the first round, and Toquero pounced on Cadena. Toquero scored a ground-and-pound finish late in the second round, and Imlah Delia bloodied Swedish Kristopher Persson's nose and got away with a unanimous victory.

But Troy Banting and Hi-Ann Michie Inchausti weren't as lucky.

Former fighter Troy Banting threw chair. Knocked out Berdonio, while Guanzo Jun Urbas Reyes stopped Banting with an anchor.

LGBA staglest sizzles with 100 fights today

MORE than 100 fights across top as the Lycum Samboree Stadium, Amoranto Sports complex hosts another leg of Pasay City Cockpit.

The Herbert Cuyan Memorial Derby will see action today, according to the group's president, Ismael Plaza.

The Cubs series began on Aug. 17 with Pito Malaya scoring the win.

Eighty-two fights are slated four sets and six more each on the second derby on Aug. 24. Pros are Cubs Rookies, Derby Kids, Vet, 30's, 40s Gonzales, Michael Sokkers, Lcc, Bata Reta, MAT, Maritime MOT, Lost Enrique and Angeles Bata Reta.

Will sports have its own Robredo?

ONE GAME AT A TIME

Jay Sarmiento

I NEVER met the man. But when he died, I could not shake off the loss like I was a relative or a friend.

This was how many Filipinos reacted to the tragic death of Interior and Local Government Secretary Jesse Robredo in a plane crash over Naga City.

His leadership and dedication to public service were legendary and unanimous. He had transformed Naga into a vibrant city that was a joy with the best urbanized and progressive in the country.

Robredo had even lent out modestly to help those in human misgivings until, who had lost in life. One misguided view developing in the second decade is that Robredo had no grand deeds or major accomplishments.

The press, mainstream social networks participants obviously never knew Robredo or read anything about him). The engineering of grief by thousands of ordinary folk, not only in Naga, and the pain felt by those who did not even know him but knew of his quiet good deeds are testimony to a life devoted to helping others.

I wonder not help may wishfully hope that a leader like Robredo would spearhead change in Philippine sports. That leader never sent her a Philippine Olympic Committee head or chair of the Philippine Sports Commission.

We need only one who has Robredo's attitude that change is possible and that those vital limitations and the cultural baggage that bring down sports are cleanly humble in overcomes.

We need a leader who will mend fences in sports from the bottom to the top, beginning with the athletes he is specific discipline.

Immediately dissolving just-not visionary units can experience handling a sports association into the least dot of national multisports management will from him/her out from the start. Once done, he or she can build steadily, seeking funding, coaching and international tournaments to mould her signature ways.

In Bogia units, the sports visionary should have a goal like Robredo's dreams for transformation Naga. If the dream is to have an Asian or Olympic champion in that sport, then so be it and the leader will work toward that goal. He or she may not immediately attain the grandchest if small gains are achieved with every effort, then it will be more than sufficient.

We may also have to revisit the need for a Secretary of Sports to consolidate efforts to improve our infrastructure and funding programs, coordinate national, grassroots and national sports participation.

I know that Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV has a bill filed in the Senate seeking to do just that, although it could take a while before a Department of Sports actually gets established and running.

A Secretary of Sports with real sports management experience running an administration can help infuse much needed reforms.

Robredo brought his experience in running a city to the national level with a variety of programs to improve local governance and public trust. He did not get a chance to see these through but the salutes given by the local governments ranks and the police were evidence that he was making an impact and making change happen in small ways at the start.

We hope that we will find our own Robredo, harnessing with limbs and hope to the capacity of the Filipino to be a world-class athlete and ability to overcome the layers of political patronage and bickering that choke sports.

We have had our many sports defeaters and have heard too many excuses why we can't advance in the international sports domain. We now need leaders who will be ruthless in all this and lead Philippine sports to dynamic highest and achieve more.

Federer, Murray in last 16

NEW YORK—Five-time champion Roger Federer defied 32-degree heat and crushing humidity to reach the US Open last 16 Saturday as potential semifinal rival Andy Murray almost rolled to the New York sweatshop.

Top seed Federer, bidding to be the first nine-time winner in 87 years, dismissed Spanish 28th seed Fernando Verdasco, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4, to a shade over two hours to make the last 16 for the 12th successive year.

The Swiss next faces American 23rd seed Mardy Fish, who beat Gilles Simon, the French 14th seed, 6-1, 3-6, 7-6 (7/3), 6-3, despite hitting 74 unforced errors.

In stark contrast, third-seeded Murray, the 2008 US Open runner-up to Federer, needed almost four hours to clinch a 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/3), 4-6, 7-6 (7/4) victory over 30th-seeded Spanish left-hander Feliciano Lopez.

Olympic champion Murray will next face 13th-seeded John Isner, the unseeded Milos Raonic, who defeated American wildcard James Blake, 6-3, 6-0, 7-6 (7/3), on the back of 29 aces to become the first Canadian to make the last 16 in 124 years.

Murray, four times a Grand Slam runner-up, had lost only one set in his prior matches against Lopez but had to come back from trailing in all three tie-breakers on Saturday.

Federer only faced one break point against Verdasco, a player he has now defeated five times in five meetings.

"I was never really in big trouble on my service games," he said.

"The heat and wind weren't really a problem, but Fernando keeps you guessing, he's a great shot-maker."

Eleventh seed Nicolas Almagro kept Spanish hopes alive when he reached the fourth round for the first time with a 7-6 (7/3), 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (7/2), 6-1 win over American wildcard Jack Sock.

Almagro will meet Greek ninth-seed Tsitsipas next.

Three-time runner's champion Serena Williams went level with sister Venus on 61 US Open career wins when she roared into the fourth round, 6-4, 6-0, over Russia's world 42 Ekaterina Makarova, the woman who knocked her out of the Australian Open this year.

Former world number one and 2008 French Open champion Ana Ivanovic reached the last 16 for the fourth time with a 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 6-2 win over highly regarded 19-year-old American Sloane Stephens.

Ivanovic blasted 57 winners, including 22 off her forehand. Jankovic 12th seed will next play the unseeded Tsvetana Pironkova from Bulgaria for a place in the quarterfinals. AFP/Reuters

MAMOYIC celebrates AFP

McIlroy fires 65, paces Deutsche Bank golf by 1

BOSTON, Massachusetts—World No. 1 Rory McIlroy fired a second straight 65 on Saturday for a one-halfway lead in the Deutsche Bank Championship with Louis Oosthuizen and Tiger Woods heading the chasing pack.

Northern Ireland's McIlroy, who earned his second career major title at the PGA Championship in August, had a 12-under total of 130 after two rounds on the par-71 TPC Boston layout.

South Africa's Oosthuizen, the 2010 British Open champion, was one shot back after a 63 for 131 and 14-time major champion Woods carded a 68 for 132, where he was joined by compatriot Ryan Moore (68).

Overnight leader Sergio Garcia of Spain of South Korea had an even par 71 and was in a group of the players on 133. AFP

US Open doubles: Huey, British partner bow out

FLYING Croatian specialist Ivan Dodig and British partner Dominic Inglot teamed to their fifth-seeded loss Saturday in the second round of the men's doubles of the US Open in New York City.

Dodig-Inglot made the third round in Flushing Meadows last year and might lost to Alexander Peya of Austria and Bruno Soares of Brazil, 6-4, 6-2, 6-4.

Peya and Soares advanced against Czech Republic's Ivo Minar (Czechia) and Michal Mertiak of Slovakia.

Huey and Inglot claimed American James Blake and Sam Querrey, 6-1, 7-6 (9-7), in the first round.

Huey, world No. 37 in doubles, is expected to move higher in the rankings which should be a morale booster when he leads the Philippines to the Davis Cup tie against Indonesia on Sept. 14-16.

Huey is expected to play doubles with Francis Casey Alcantara, a former Australian Open juniors doubles champion. Marc Anthony Reyes

Ylanan gold caps PH K1 World Cup karate stint

JOHOR, Mac Ylanan captured a gold medal and Princess Ivy Sinsuan added a silver for the national team in the K1 World Cup karate championships held in Busan, South Korea, last month.

The 20-year-old Ylanan from Tacloban City prevailed over a Korean in the finals of the 60-kilogram category while Sinsuan fell short against a Hong Kong bet in the gold medal match of the 61-kg division.

The nine-man team, seen by the Philippine Karatedo Federation, also chose with two golds, a silver and a bronze to the International meet under US.

Charles Bonagua, 16, emerged the best fighter in the 57-kg division and Alex Lay, 15, topped the kata event in the 12-under level. The lone silver came in the 70-kg division, courtesy of Bryan Rotellini.

The squad of Bonagua, Lay, Rotellini and Andrew Blanco-Ay ended up third in the boys' team championship.

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Pagunsan ties for 32nd in Japan

FARMINGTON, Japan — Pangasinan boxer Rod Pagunsan finished in the final round with his worst score of 3-over-par 73 and secured 54-hole 32nd of the Japan Golf Tour's Fukuoka Classic title. The Filipino pro-player finished with a 208 total, 12 strokes behind winner Kim Kyung-tae of South Korea, who posted 65-68-69 (altered 7/20 2005). Fukuoka's champion carded a 70 in the third round and remained among the Golfweek's #27 in the Omega European Masters in Switzerland.

UST's Denolo, Yuson survive Intrepid Challenge

ROGER Denolo and Carlo Yuson risked through first leg of the Intrepid Trustees Challenge 10K last run held recently at La Mesa Nature Reserve in Barangay City Quezon, who conquered the University of Santo Tomas in the 5,000-m (of) and 2,000-m disciplines was in the 10,000 and other regional track meets, docked 44 minutes and 10 seconds while Yuson submitted 1:04:00. Participants jumped over logs, crossed streams, climbed the wood and travelled mud walls. The second leg is slated Sept. 16 at UP Memorial Circle.

SPORTS

PH chess aces pull off twin kill

By Roy Luarca

ISTANBUL, Turkey — Team Philippines rebounded with another twin kill in the fifth round of the Open and Women divisions Saturday, boosting its chances at the 40th Chess Olympiad here.

Grandmasters Oliver Barbosa and Mark Paragua handled their board 2 and 4 rivals to power the men's team to a 3-1 victory over Ireland and to a share of fifth to 21st place with eight match points on four wins and one loss.

Top seed Russia and No. 3 Armenia have perfect 10 points each while Azerbaijan and Croatia trailed a point behind.

The Filipina women, with Woman International Master Catherine Perena and Jelena Dweso extending the full point, posted their third straight 3-1 victory at the expense of the South Africans and jumped to eight points.

Two more wins for sixth to 16th in the division also being paced by Russia with 10 points, just a point up on China, Poland, Serbia and Slovakia.

Tiwi Isi, both IM teams are outstanding for category honors in the biennial news that drew a record field of 157 countries and 1,487 players.

Barrel only 35th, the Filipinos head Group B (teams seeded 32nd to 62nd) while their female counterparts, ranked 57th, are on track of duplicating their Group C (teams ranked 33rd to 75th) 46 result in the 2008 Torino Olympiad.

A day after holding Armenian Super GM Levon Aronian—the tournament's highest-rated player with an Elo of 2816—to a draw, Filipino GM Wesley So couldn't gain headway with black and settled for a draw with Ireland's board 1 player GM Hannes Stefansson.

Given the chance to play on the day his country was ranked back home, Asia's first GM Eugene Torre drew with GM Thavarar Thebaldeen on board 3 to seal the fifth point victory and miss their game points would've 15.5, leading Azerbaijan (16.5) but ahead of Russia and Armenia (14.5 each).

The Filipinos, with board 5 player IM Oliver Barabadiq dropping to 3.0 points, earlier finished the Libyan 14-0, upset the Maldivians (2.5-1.5) and routed the Icelander 14-0 before yielding to the two-time champion Armenians (1.5-2.5).

Wednesday's tipping the defenses of GM Heorth Dimaclaro with white, the 25-year-old Barbosa seen in 55 moves of a Reger-Indian with Dragon, after handling white, subdued IM Dragan Arsenijevic after 48 moves of the Sicilian Lines.

The Filipinos aim to reclaim their—silver from a seven-over 5006 place finish in the 2010 Khanty-Mansiysk Olympiad, will battle the strong 166-seeded Belgians in the ninth round Monday.

Belgium beat Peru, 2.5-1.5, Saturday.

Led by Super GM Roelie Topalov (Elo 2702), Belgium also boasts GM Ilkil Georgiev (2606), GM Ivan Osipenko (2681), GM Alexander Delchev (2598) and GM Mitrichil Nikolov (2563).

Gunning for a top 40 tabletop, the Filipino women take on the 144th-ranked French, who yielded to the reigning title Ukraine, 1.5-2.5.

After sweeping her first five matches, Jennifer Mae Pesigan conceded a draw with WIM Cecile Van Der Merwe on board 2 while Jan Jedilyn Frondo, winner of her first two matches, followed suit on board 4. Both have winning lines but missed them due to time pressure.

Perena, a former University of the Philippines training crossed WGM Melissa Greeff to 46 moves of a Sicilian while Dweso, a BS Education senior at the Eastern University, wore inconvertible moves against WIM Dorian Fenh in a Nimzo-Indian Defense.

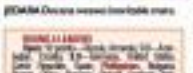
The 11-round Olympiad took a break Sunday with participants and guests given options to join tours.

Torre and his wife Marilin accompanied the girls team to tourist spots. So, Barbosa, Paragua and Shrinkhlog opted to stay behind at Radisson Blu hotel and study the Bulgarians' games.

Featured fifth round matches in the Open division saw Armenia nip Ukraine, 3.5-1.5, thanks drawn Hungary 2.5-1.5; Azerbaijan rout Canada, 3.5-0.5; and China dump Iran, 3.5-0.5. The Germany-Montenegro, US-Czech Republic and India-England matches ended in 2-2 ties.

Tagaytay City Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino, also the National Union Federation of the Philippines secretary general, will be arriving Monday to attend the 80th Olympiad Congress here and provide moral support to the team coached and headed by FIDE executive director GM Ironov Gonzales.

JESSICA Dweso seeses board pole mate.



Banal gets rare world title crack on Oct. 20

By Marc Anthony Reyes

AJ "BAZOOKA" Banal will be eyeing more than the world title when he faces Thai Pongkong for Singpo next month.

One of the country's most promising boxing stars, Banal will try to become the first former Pekarong Batchoma champion to capture a world crown when he battles the IBF(Intercontinental) title Pongkun on Oct. 20 at Mall of Asia Arena.

The 23-year-old Banal won a gold medalist during the 2002 Palarong Pambansa in Naga City where he topped the 46-kg division representing Region 7.

The Cebu-based slugger, a product of the MJ Boxing promotions, is the underdog against Pongkun (52-3-0, 27 knockouts) in their clash for the title vacated by Mexican legend Jorge Arce, who moved up to the 122-pound division recently only to lose the chance to fight Filipino WBO-OPBF champ Nonito Donaire Jr.

"Back then, we were looking at the Baja City and Daroo boxers as the toughest," said Banal in Filipino during a dinner with sportswriters Thursday night.

Born in Bohidoro, Banal just came from a top-to-three Regional

BAZOOKA. Fight-endearing

which capped his day's training in Ilocos Dorte in Ortigas.

Banal (20-1-1, 20 KOs) said he broke bricks in his preparation for the world title fight. The 5-foot-4, cuts-be-bound fighter has resumed his training in Cebu City.

"We will make sure he gets all the advantage of being a southpaw," said his handler Chuck Cassano of MJA.

Kaya blanks PAF, rules Kia Cup

By Cedelf P. Tupas

KAYA shut out Air Force, 2-0, yesterday to rule the men's open division of the Kia Cup at Alabang Country Club.

Sean Hill and Aaron Ugarte struck in each half as the United Football League side stopped the crown of the seven-a-side tournament that showcased a clear for kids conducted by members of the national team.

Both teams featured members of the national team with Chiefly Caligdong and his former teammate Ronald Gerrit to 46 moves of a Sicilian while Dweso, a BS Education senior at the Eastern University, wore inconvertible moves against WIM Dorian Fenh in a Nimzo-Indian Defense.

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Azkals leave today for 3-country swing

NTFU suspension on six counts and one of to key players looming, the Philippine football team leaves for Cambodia today to start a three-country swing in preparation for the AFF Suzuki Cup in November.

Eleven coach Michael Weiss will still travel with the Azkals as his file an appeal to rescind a two-match suspension meted by the Philippine Football Federation Disciplinary Committee for a "failure in leadership" during the Philippines-Malaysia friendly last February.

James Younghusband, who skippered the team in the match, is also expected to appeal the decision that rules him out from the match against Cambodia on Wednesday.

The committee had earlier cleared Icelos Hoy and Angel Guirado from the second

Antonio Gonzalez, who is also the tournament director, said the tournament is a way to help underprivileged children.

"I don't get the point so much because first of all the people in the locker room have been given the tasks to look after the team in case I'm absent," Peter told the reporters. "We are a team that works well so there's no necessity for the coach to be with his players all the time like a kindergarten teacher."

The Azkals, whose members conducted a clinic yesterday at Philsports in Pasig as part of the launching of the 1 Goal for Peace program of the Office of the Presidential Adviser for the Peace Process, face Singapore on Friday and Laos on Sept. 16. *Cedelf P. Tupas*

Watch out for the new Inquirer Tabl

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Ayala eyes geothermal, hydro plants

640-MW Leyte facility, 150-MW Casecnan complex

By Amy R. Remo

AYALA Corp. is looking at managing the contracted capacities of the 640-megawatt Unified Leyte geothermal facilities and the 150-MW Casecnan hydropower plant as it moves to increase its foothold in the local energy market.

Eric T. Francia, managing director and group head for corporate strategy and development of Ayala, said the company was studying whether it would participate in the bidding for the independent power producer administration (IPPA) contracts that were supposed to be conducted by state-run Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) within the fourth quarter this year.

According to Francia, Ayala has yet to decide if it would pursue its participation in the government holding with a partner as it previously did when it sought to acquire four clustered power barges.

Ayala earlier formed a partnership with Team-Asia Oil and Energy Development Corp. when it submitted an offer to acquire Power Barges 101, 102, 103 and 104 during the first tranche of bidding held in May this year.

Any acquisition of a government power asset or contracted capacity is one of the options being considered by Ayala in achieving its target of having a 1,000-MW power portfolio over the next five years, as a new player in the power generation industry. Ayala is working aggressively to at least start moving forward its target portfolio, which is expected to require investments of up to $2.5 billion.

Ayala is also looking at several greenfield power projects that will use traditional fuels like coal as well as renewable energy sources, particularly hydro resources.

PSALM intends to bid out the IPPA contracts for Casecnan and Unified Leyte before the year ends.

The Casecnan facility in Nueva Ecija is a combined irrigation and hydroelectric power project, which is the first multipurpose build-operate-transfer (BOT) project in the Philippines. A previous report by the Department of Energy, however, noted one possible "major hitch" in the privatization of the IPPA contract as the facility's ownership might still revert to the government through the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), instead of the IPP administrator, unlike in the case of other IPPA.

AYALA, B2

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Aug. 31, 2012
42.060

STOCK MARKET
Aug. 31, 2012
46.88

(See stock market report on Page B4)

Lackluster trading seen

AT 9:59 last week's opening, the local stock market may return to a consolidation mode this week or even pull back slightly on the dearth of incentives to lead up an equities-to-a big way.

Last week, the main share Philippine Stock Exchange index gained 51.84 points or 1 percent to close at 5,196.19.

In an interview, Pentacapital investments chief strategist Luis

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'LQ' or deal breaker?

PLDT/SMART Long Distance Telephone Co. chair Manuel V. Pangilinan has likened the links over the table with selling shareholders of ION Network Inc. to a lovers' quarrel or "LQ," but what is really the source of the LQ? Is it enough to be a deal breaker?

Biz Buzz
by the staff

Biz Buzz learned that the current source of the deadlock between the prospective buyers and sellers (also already narrowing close to an acceptable pricing) is the amount of down payment that the investment behind ION 7 insisted MVP to lay on the table.

As we all know, congressional approval is needed for any deal to be consummated, but while MVP's group may be willing to pay P625 billion in cash for the whole of ION 7 based on an enterprise valuation for 100 percent of the broadcast firm, the question is how much cash he will agree to pay in "advance."

Given the anti-trust issues that cropped out when PLDT took over rival Digitel, will MVP have an easier sailing getting approval for this GMA7 takeover, specially when it's Congress he has to deal with? The answer to that this will be a more daunting task.

However, our sources say the amount of down payment sought by GMA 7 is sizable enough for MVP to budge, knowing the risk such advance payment can be forfeited. In other words, the sellers still have passion and will agree to tough out ahead of getting an imprimatur from both houses of Congress.

In the worst case, however, MVP must be thinking he may just as well channel more funds to TV5 if he can't bring home the bacon this second time around. — Doris C. Bumatay

New CIMB guy

MALAYSIAN banking giant CIMB, which recently bought Bank of Commerce from the crisis-hitting Sen. Miguel group, has named a notable Filipino guy to head its operations in the Philippines, consolidate the existing link in its Southeast Asian expansion spree.

According to the reliable grapevine, Credit Suisse First Boston managing director for the Philippines Romeo Puteruva is joining CIMB to become the president of Bank of Commerce, subject to approval by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas of CIMB's purchase of a controlling stake in Bank of Commerce. If all will go as planned, Puteruva will assume the post before the year ends.

Other ex-CSFB, Deutsche turncoat as president of the state-owned Development Bank of the Philippines, but his long stint was as an investment banker at JP Morgan for 18 years, with stints in New York and Hong Kong. A Stanford MBA alumnus, Palacios is an Ateneon (graduated cum laude in 85) Economics, honors program in economics) and a 1999 YOYM (Ten Outstanding Young Men) Philippines awardee for investment banking.

While Puteruva's upcoming departure from CSFB, the latter will be led by Chinot Huang. CSFB has likewise beefed up its ranks by hiring a new guy, Ashwin Parekh, previously from Goldman Sachs. — Doris C. Bumatay

Wanted: Next DOE chief

THE SEARCH is on (again) for a new energy secretary to replace Rene Almendras at the Department of Energy, according to our sources. Almendras has long been slated to be named to the Presidential Management Staff, but this has been delayed by the absence of a "viable alternative" (again) from the political cobwebs from inside the Palace of course).

The energy slot was going to be given to Liberal Party stalwart Rep. Joseph Emilio Abaya, but this plan has now been overtaken, by events, with the Aranguiz graduate now being appointed to head the Department of Transportation and Communications.

The thing is, Abaya was not even going to go the DOE also initially with the President supposedly having already chosen accountant-lawyer Hard Roman for the post.

What's on the street, however, is that P-Noy changed his mind after "persuasion"—who was hurling threatened by Roman's impending appointment—subsequent consulting to the President.

So ... the search for a DOE chief continues. — Dennis L. Lacuo

iPhone 5 landing soon

IF RUMORS spreading online are any indication, Apple is getting ready to launch the latest model of its widely successful iPhone—dubbed the iPhone 5—this month.

The question that Filipino smart phone enthusiasts are asking is: When will the iPhone 5 be made available locally?

As in the past, iPhone units are often made available at retailers in Greenhills within days of those being launched by Apple in the United States (at a steep price premium, of course).

However, according to people in the know from local telecommunications firms, the Philippines—being a hot market for smart phone makers due to its tech-savvy consumers—will not have to wait very long for legitimate iPhone 5 units. Chances are, the Philippines will be included in the second wave of countries (in the league of Hong Kong and Singapore) where the iPhone 5 will be launched. The diametrically short-lived lag time is likely due to Apple's desire to cap the popularity of the Samsung Galaxy S3.

Incidentally, there are rumors that the iPhone 5 will have dimensions similar to that of the Galaxy S3 (i.e. larger touch-screen) and will probably run on 4G Long Term Evolution mobile phone networks that both Globe Telecom and Smart Communications are now rolling out. As usual, expect both telecommunications firms to try to outdo each others' iPhone 5 launch events.

So ... will the iPhone 5 be here by Christmas? Definitely. Possibly as soon as October, in fact. — Dennis L. Lacuo

Speaking of Globe...

GLOBE Telecom used its rivals ore in the middle of a battle royale for market dominance, with the latter using an aggressive negative ad campaign to capitalize on the former's network troubles (caused, in part, by an ongoing P700-million system upgrade).

A cursory glance at various social media sites will show that, indeed, a lot of people have been complaining about the quality of Globe's service, specially in terms of dropped calls, delayed SMS delivery or slow data speeds.

So we checked Globe's subscriber numbers and found out that, during the latest reporting period (when complaints were at their loudest) the Ayala-controlled firm had gained (net of "churn") 112,000 postpaid subscribers. During the same period... and despite Globe's network issues—it added (gained) 19,000 prepaid subscribers.

So, what gives? Apparently, while subscribers are complaining, many have chosen to just wait patiently another month or so for the service to normalize. — Dennis L. Lacuo

For business alerts and a preview of the items the morning before it comes out, text ON INQUIRERBIZ to 4467 (PLDT subscribers).

Ayala eyes geothermal, hydro plants

From page B1

contracts.

For the Unified Leyte geothermal complex, PSALM is still working on refinancing to commercial maturities to prevent market disturbance by a single firm and to make the facility financially viable.

"We are still working on [the Unified Leyte IPPA contract] but we intend to divide [the commercial capacity] into two or three contracts, which, in turn, would allow more bidders to participate and allow PSALM to maximize the proceeds that may be generated from the privatization," PSALM president Emmanuel E. Ledesma Jr. said in an earlier interview.

Given the large generating capacity of the Unified Leyte geothermal complex, PSALM explained that there might not be that many competitors left to take on the IPPA amount without breaching the so-called market participant generation to the Visayas.

Meanwhile, those who may be allowed to acquire the Unified IPPA without breaching the cap might not have sufficient financial capacity.

Under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act, a company or group of related companies is barred from owning, operating, or controlling more than 30 percent of the installed generating capacity of a grid or 25 percent of the country's total installed capacity.

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PLDT plans to issue P8B in long-term debt paper

Quicker fund-raising option than sale of stocks

By Doris C. Dumlao

LOCAL telecom giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. plans to raise as much as P8 billion from the sale of long-term debt paper to selected institutional investors.

PLDT has awarded sell plans to issue up to P8 billion corporate notes with tenures ranging from five to 10 years, several banking sources told the Inquirer.

Unlike retail bonds, which are sold through a public offering and must go through a more tedious registration process at the Securities and Exchange Commission, corporate notes are a quicker bond-raising option for top-tier corporations as they are sold to no more than 19 selected institutional investors.

Asked about the planned issuance of P8 billion in corporate notes, PLDT spokesperson Ramon Isberto said: "We are in preliminary discussions for possible participants in a refinancing facility."

Based on PLDT's financial statement as of end-June, PLDT has P4.99 billion in maturing debt, of which P4 billion is denominated in dollars and P1.01 billion in the local currency. Both July to December this year. Unhedged debt maturities for the coming years are: P12.39 billion for 2013, P24.07 billion for 2014, P15.27 billion for 2015 and P15.97 billion for 2016 onwards.

By refinancing some of its obligations, PLDT will be able to better manage its debt stack. As of end-June, PLDT had P100.3 billion in long-term debt, of which 013.5 billion is current or maturing within a year.

PLDT is the dominant player in the local telecom sector with a 68-percent share of the cellular phone market, 64 percent of broadband Internet and 66 percent of fixed-line business.

The telecom giant is also the first Philippine company to earn an investment grade rating from all three major international credit watchers—Standard & Poor's, Moody's and Fitch Ratings. With the rating, it enjoys a higher debt rating than the Philippine government, which is rated at one to two notches below investment grade by the same credit watchdogs.

PLDT is also expanding its tires and rimobile services through an investment in Mediaquest Holdings, owner of direct-to-home Cignal TV and television network TV5. Mediaquest is wholly owned subsidiary of PLDT.

Maynilad expands water network

Maynilad Water Services Inc. installed a total of 2,423 kilometers of new pipes since 2007, effectively expanding its water distribution network in the West Zone by 6,000 kilometers by the first half of 2012.

More than P12 billion was spent for the network expansion, which benefited more than 466,000 households in Valenzuela, Malabon, Navotas, Caloocan, Manila, Makati, Pasay, Muntinlupa, Mandaluyong, Las Piñas and Cavite.

Aside from increasing water pressure and extending water supply coverage, Maynilad's primary and secondary pipe-laying projects also generated supplemental opportunities for more than 131,500 people in the first half of this year.

For the last half 2012, Maynilad plans to install an additional 700 kilometers of new pipes within its concession area.

"There are still areas in the West Zone that have no access to potable, surface water from Maynilad. The only recourse of residents in these areas is to use deep wells or pay for expensive water deliveries from private retailers," said Maynilad President and CEO Ricky Vargas. "Our goal is to reach all areas in our concession as we aggressively pursue expansion efforts."

Maynilad is a concessionaire of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System for the West Zone of the Greater Manila Area, which is composed of the cities of Manila (all but portions of San Andres and Sta. Ana), Quezon City (west of Aurora Boulevard), Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Makati, Mandaluyong, Marikina, Pateros, San Juan, Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas, Valenzuela, Pasig, Taguig, Pateros, Rizal (Cainta, Taytay, Angono, Binangonan, Antipolo, Rodriguez, San Mateo, Montalban, Teresa, Baras, Tanay, Pililla, Jala-Jala, Morong, Cardona, Tanay, Pililla, Jala-Jala, Morong, Cardona, Tanay, Pililla, Jala-Jala, Morong, Cardona

Big Japan toy maker to put up factory in PH

Bandai investing P400M in Batangas export zone

By Amy R. Remo

JAPANESE toy manufacturer Bandai Namco Group is investing P400 million to put up a factory in Lima, within the 465-hectare Lima Technology Center in Batangas, according to Lima Land Inc.

In a statement, Lima Land marketing officer Marcia Sandee C. Ong said the planned factory, a multi-storey building, will manufacture figures, vending machine capsule products and other amusement items. The construction of the 14,000-square-meter factory is expected to begin this October and operations are projected to start next year.

Ong, however, did not disclose the capacity of the plant, but only said that the entire output of the Bandai factory would be purely for export. None of the production will be allocated for domestic sales.

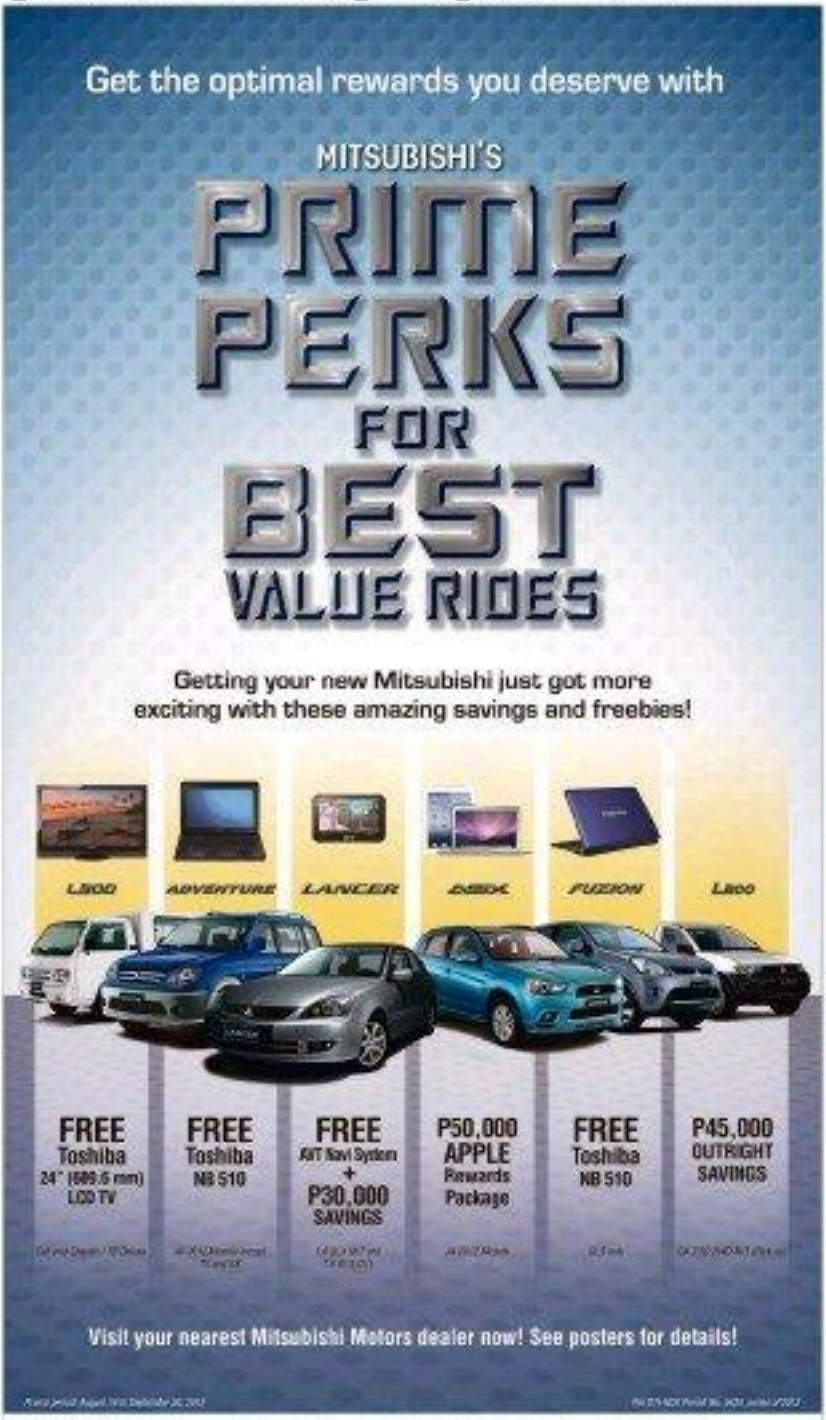
The production facility in Batangas will be overseen by Bandai (Philippines) Inc., a new subsidiary of the Bandai Namco Group. The group, through its toys and hobby creation business unit, is the manufacturer of the popular Tamagotchi virtual pet electronic game. Bandai Namco also produces the Gundam and Power Rangers series of action figures.

The Lima Technology Center, the largest tenant of the Ayala-Lima Holdings, currently hosts 36 locators employing more than 20,000 employees. Locators in the Lima corridor are engaged in various manufacturing pursuits, ranging from automobile components and motorcycles to printers, plastic moldings and LCD projectors.

The industrial park has been designated as a special economic zone by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority. Ong's chief also boasts locators to enjoy various incentives such as income tax holidays and exemption from duties and taxes for imported capital equipment.

The Lima Technology Center is a project of Lima Land Inc., a joint venture of Japan's Marubeni Corp. and Ayala Land Corp., of the Ayala family.

Apart from the creation and management of industrial estates and other property development projects, the diversified group is also engaged in specialties, agribusiness, power project development, banking, financial management and services.



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Local property sector boom seen to continue

By Doris C. Dumlao

Experts cite strong economic growth, low interest rates

THE LOCAL property sector is nowhere near any bubble with residential and office rental rates and their property values in Metro Manila's major central business districts (CBDs) will likely to rise within the next 12 months on buoyant demand, property experts from Colliers International said.

In a briefing on Friday, Colliers Philippines associate director Julius Guevara said 5,900 additional residential units were likely to be completed each year, bringing the residential stock in major CBDs to 64,000 units by end-2014, 30 percent higher than the level in end-2011.

However, he noted that prime launches and take-up were closely tracking each other, saying that the real estate industry was underpinned by the country's strong economic growth, overseas Filipino remittances, record-low interest rates, prudent real estate exposure of

(DORIS, B2)

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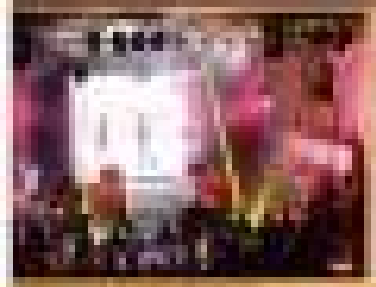

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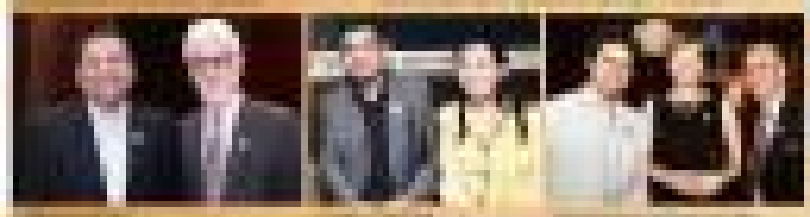

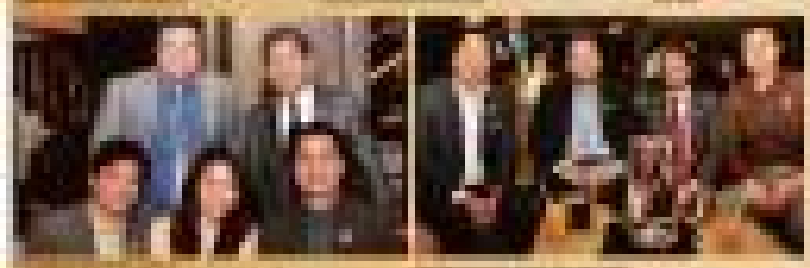

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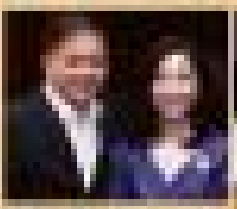

BUSINESS

Economic growth seen to slow down in 2nd half

Firm cites sluggish export demand, weak gov't spending

By Raoul M. Dominguez

THE PHILIPPINE economy is expected to grow slower in the second semester, possibly with sluggish demand for Philippine exports and a "still small" budget deficit as of July, according to the ING Group.

The Regional Financial Coordination Board last week reported that gross domestic product grew by 5.9 percent year-on-year in the second quarter, bringing the first-semester growth to 6.1 percent.

The NSCB said the semiconductor industry led the main drivers of growth while manufacturing showed consistent growth and construction rebounded.

On the other hand, the NSCB said the composite leading economic indicators for the third quarter eased slightly after improving continually during the previous five consecutive quarters, indicating "a possible slowdown of economic activity" in July to September.

ING said in research note to clients that the outlook to the second semester was tamed, although monetary authorities have plenty of space to intervene.

"Inflation, although likely to tick up due to food price pressures, should still remain on the low end of the central bank's target of 3 to 5 percent," the financial service provider said. "This implies that further monetary easing is certainly possible."

The Singapore-based group also observed that despite improving disbursements, fiscal spending remained slow with the budget deficit reaching just P73.1 billion in the seven months to July.

"Things are not as auspicious on the external front and this will be reflected in the export numbers," ING said. "In particular, electronics exports are still the mainstay and a sustained improvement on this regional segment unlikely."

ING forecasts a full-year growth of 5.2 percent for the Philippines, saying that the fiscal figure will be anchored on a strong first half even if growth slows in the second half.

Further, ING said non-electronics goods, which helped shrink up exports in the second quarter following a slack in electronics shipments, might support continued economic growth for the rest of this year.

"The biggest risk to growth in the second semester is slowing external demand and that has been factored in to our full-year growth forecast," ING said. "It is far from clear that the surge in non-electronics countries exports can be maintained and elevates to exports may provide a better signal of external demand."

Local property

From page B1-1

limits and the growth is slowing and outsourcing industry.

While the property was inherently cyclical, Guevara said in an interview that there were ways to avoid forming a bubble. Apart from closely monitoring market trends, he said the strategy of providing a critical mass before starting construction was a big help to developers. "It's less speculative if they do it based on demand," he said.

"Not all cycles end in bubbles," said Colliers Philippines' managing director David Young, noting that at the moment, property supply and demand were moving in the same trajectory. He said there was no room for doubt "unless we see a significant surge in construction levels without suddenly demand is not there to fill that space up."

At present, market land values are still rising. Based on Colliers' research, land values in Makati CBD have increased by 2.8 percent in the second quarter year-on-year while values in Ortigas have risen by 5 percent. But Bonifacio Global City posted the biggest year-on-year increase at 19.2 percent.

By the second quarter of 2013, Colliers projected that land values would exceed P500,000 a square meter in the Makati CBD and P300,000 in Ortigas. Specifically, land values were forecast to hit P383,809 in Makati, P225,000 in BGC and P139,914 in Ortigas.

As of mid-June this year, per square meter land values averaged P284,835 in Makati CBD, P193,574 in BGC and P131,427 in Ortigas. On a quarter-on-quarter basis, these figures were higher by 0.2 percent, 1.4 percent and 0.8 percent, respectively.

For grade-A residential units, rental rates in Rockwell, estimated at P675 to P900 a square meter, were seen to grow by 4 percent over the next 12 months. In BGC, the rental rate is seen to rise by 6 percent from P565 to P630 over the same period, and in Ortigas, by 5 percent from P575 to P660.

In terms of vacancy rates, Ortigas has the highest at 13.5 percent, followed by Makati CBD at 11.1 percent and BGC at 9.08 percent. Rockwell has the lowest at 3.4 percent, based on Colliers research.

The large supply of studio and one-bedroom units, a segment most associated with Grade-A and -B buildings, has contributed to the relatively high level of vacancies since last year, based on the research.

For office property, Colliers estimated that Metro Manila's total office stock as of 2Q12 was 6 million sq m last middle street. Makati's share fell from 75 percent in the 1990s to just 40 percent at end-2011. That share might decline to 40 percent in the span of two years, Guevara said.

Office property inventory is expected to exceed 7 million sq m (just inside) next by end-2013, substantially driven by BPO offices. About 46 percent of the new supply would come from BGC, the research said.

In terms of vacancy rate, Makati CBD has a vacancy rate of 3.99 percent in the second quarter compared to BGC's 3.95 percent and Ortigas' 5.22 percent.

Colliers expects rental rates in Makati to rise by 4.6 percent in the next 12 months. At present, rental rates are at P940-P950/sq m for premium units, P550 to P600 for Grade-A units and P460-P500 for Grade-B units.

In BGC, the office rental rate is seen to grow by 3.9 percent in the next 12 months. Grade-A rentals now priced at P650-P750 and Grade-B at P450-P480/sq m in BGC.

For Ortigas, Colliers projected a 4.6 percent growth in rental rates from P450 to P600/sq m for Grade-A and P300-P360 range for Grade-B units at present.

BUSINESS

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Massive PH liquidity offers rare chance for firms

Corporate issues seen to meet demand of fund managers seeking higher yields

By Doreen G. Lucas

LOCAL corporations are facing a rare opportunity to raise funds—whether on the debt or equity side of their balance sheets—at likely low costs, while would-be investors in these corporate issues face an equally rare chance to receive better returns amid an environment of muted risk.

This is the prevailing view among several bankers, investors, as well as policy makers who believe that prevailing circumstances make the capital markets "extremely attractive" for parties on both the "buy" and "sell" sides.

"In general, there's so much money in the financial system, and there's a dearth of investment instruments available to investors. So demand is really strong," BDO Capital president Eduardo Francisco told the business in an interview.

The liquidity flooding the Philippines is due in part to the massive amounts of cash draining around in the financial system owned by Filipinos who are seeking better investment opportunities.

It is also compounded by foreign funds making into the country unnerved by relatively high bond yields, and fleeing the extremely low interest regime abroad amid attempts by the US Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank to spur their economies by keeping their borrowing costs at record lows.

According to the latest data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, some P1.6 trillion in funds are parked idly and unproductively in its special deposit account (SDA) facility, earning a fine great annual yield of 3.79 percent—which is still significantly higher than the 0.25 percent yield in the United States.

Because of this historically rare situation, many local corporations have taken the opportunity to raise funds from capital markets on both the debt and equity sides.

Real estate developer Vista Land and Lifescapes, for one, is raising P5.5 billion by issuing "homebuilder bonds" which yield an attractive 8 percent.

On the equity side, publicly listed JVH Diesel of businessman Bambo Tiaoqui announced plans to raise as much as P4.5 billion from sale of 1 billion shares to investors.

Another equity issuer, Thinkday Holdings—the newly reorganized flagship firm of the Lucio Tan group—will sell approximately 2.5 billion shares to comply with the Philippine Stock Exchange's free float rule, in a deal that could be worth as much as P37 billion based on prevailing market prices.

Even a government housing agency, the National Home Mortgage Finance Corp., has joined the bandwagon, recently selling over P600 million in bonds to retail creditors.

This phenomenon has also manifested itself overseas, with Bloomberg News reporting over the weekend that corporate bond sales around the world in August hit a total of $257 billion—the highest ever recorded for the month.

"Many corporates are taking this opportunity to borrow," Francisco explained. "If you believe in the Philippines' growth story, this is a good strategy. If you believe the peso will appreciate, then investing in peso assets makes sense."

"The name of the game for both issuers and investors nowadays is yield, regardless of whether we're talking about debt or equity securities," said HSBC Philippines senior vice president and country treasurer Wok Wilson.

Many of the bank's clients have, for some time now, been clamoring for better investment yields from securities with relatively low risk profiles, he explained.

At present, both Wilson and Francisco are in the process of selling to their clients preferred shares of diversified conglomerate San Miguel Corp.—a local issue potentially worth as much as P60 billion.

At an issue price of P75 apiece, the preferred shares are being marketed to both corporate and retail buyers.

"For investors, they should consider medium-term investment assets in the 5-, 7- and 10-year area that provide good returns," the HSBC treasurer added.

Wilson and Francisco have, of course, an interest in pushing corporate bonds, as both their firms are underwriters of the SMC preferred shares.

But the head of the BSP—who needs to make an such push—broadly agrees with the bankers' views.

"The view is interest rates will likely remain low globally, so picking up some good fixed income investments now can potentially yield you capital gains," BSP Governor Amando M. Tetangco Jr. told the business, when asked about potential investment strategies. "But (it really) depends on your risk appetite."

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Century Properties to invest ₱7B in mass projects

By Doris C. Dumlao

Group to focus resources on affordable residential properties

PROPERTY developer Century Properties Group plans to invest P7 billion this year to boost its affordable residential property portfolio, according to the firm's sales take-up of its debut offering in the sector.

CPG reported that its first condominium project on Commonwealth, Quezon City—an eight-tower mid-rise development with units worth P1.5 to P3 million each, and targeting young professionals and starter families—has attracted strong investor sales since its recent launch.

"Sales have been brisk, with Century almost fully pre-selling two towers since the launch one month ago. This is positive in that Commonwealth by Century has been tremendously well-embraced by the public for its affordability and lifestyle offering," CPG co-chief operating officer Marco Antonio said.

"Our Commonwealth project is only the first of a series of master-planned developments that Century plans or will roll out in key cities nationwide for this category. We recognize the demand for residential property outside Metro Manila and this is part of our expansion plans," Antonio added in a statement.

The ₱4.1 billion Commonwealth project is a mid-rise development offering a total of 1,300 units and a sales value of over ₱3.9 billion.

CPG plans to significantly boost its portfolio for the affordable market segment with its P7 billion investment in this separate but linked share.

"The market is hungry for unique products with intrinsic value, and reasonable monthly amortization unveiled over a two-year to five-year period," Antonio added.

For the second quarter, CPG reported P5.45 billion in pre-sales, of which 19 percent, or ₱1 percent and 41 percent came from the luxury, middle income and affordable markets, respectively.

This suggests the build-up of potential revenue contribution from significant progress on the construction of those projects is made.

Property developers recognize revenues net of pre-sold property units only after construction milestones are reached.

With 26 years in the business of real estate development, marketing and property management, CPG has completed 29 condominium buildings (4,126 units) with a total gross floor area of 348,262 square meters.

It is managing 11 properties as of end-2011. CPG seeks to achieve "full-penetration, quality real estate."

Designed by the award-winning Tom Beaudoux Malayan with Century's in-house architecture team, the eight mid-rise towers of CPG's Commonwealth project are named after the prominent personalities of the Commonwealth period.

Damaso Place, the first building, will rise to 11 floors with 200 units and will be delivered in 2013. Succeeding buildings such as the Quezon, Roxas, Osmeña and Quirino towers will rise to as high as 22 storeys.

Units will come in studios and one-bedroom configurations that range from 21 to 49 square meters with an average price of ₱80,000 per square meter.

Larger-size two-bedroom units from 64 to 72 square meters will be worth at least P5 million are also available.

Workers seek change of scene

By Filippa Ang
Contributor

COMMENTARY

THE OFFICE market of 2012 is shedding two different time zones.

On the one hand, 21st century technology lets them work anywhere.

On the other, 20th century work habits mean they are still expected in "the office."

Workers are feeling the clutch.

Thus, in a recent survey, 50 percent said the option to work remotely is one of the three main job perks, almost a third would take a reduction in paid vacation, and a quarter a pay cut, in order to work remotely.

The rise of the third place

Working at home is not necessarily the answer, though. Of those who do work at home, 45 percent say they watch TV or movies, 30 percent play video games, 26 percent sleep and...

Sounds like the ideal work-life balance? Apparently not: another study shows that only 12 percent of people want to work at home all the time.

There are just too many distractions, not enough facilities, and they miss the professional atmosphere of an office.

So, the trend sweeping Europe is working in a "third place."

Instead of working at the office (the "first place") or home (the "second place"), people are working (laptop, tablet, and/or smartphone in tow) in cafés, business lounges, business centers, co-working hubs and coffee shops.

There's no single, definitive "third place" to work; people opt for the place that best suits their location, working style and scheduling.

The trend for third place working goes hand in hand with the spread of more flexible work practices, such as giving people discretion over where and when they work.

A big 72 percent of businesses globally say this leads directly to greater productivity.

A third space is coming near you

Third place is not new: We all know about co-working, but it's become branded as something for the urban creatives, the tech guys.

The image is misleading, because it obscures the view of millions of other people in the US who already work at third spaces—checking e-mails at a coffee shop, working in their pajamas, and so on.

They just don't think of it as a "third space." And they would probably benefit from a more comfortable third space—professional workspaces instead of viewing our in-a-noisy-coffee-shop or their cubicle.

Unusually, Europe is selling the pain on this, across Europe, flexible workspaces are opening closer to or actually at the places where people live and travel.

The French and Dutch rail operators, SNCF and NS Trains, have joined forces with Regus to open walk-in business lounges at busy rail stations.

Both and Regus are piloting initiatives to get commuters at gas stations, Starbucks in Europe. Regus and Swiss Mobiliary Berkhien are opening drop-in work places near to key highways in the UK.

Time better spent

These new categories of third places mean that, instead of being forced to travel to an office tower that happened to be convenient in the 1980s, people can access equivalent facilities—wifi, meeting space, printers, and the networking opportunities that coalesce around them—at a place nearer where they want to be.

It could be a train, a bus, a restaurant, or near shops and leisure facilities. Ten per cent of Regus' business comes in the US as in shopping malls, and seeing to people's desire to work at locations that fit their daily lives, there's seeing high occupancy rates and rapidly rising demand. Less time on the car, more time to work and play.

Technology is the enabler for third space working. Time is the driver. Latest census results in the US show the average commute in the US is now over 20 minutes.

In parts of New York, New Jersey, Washington DC, Baltimore, Chicago, Atlanta, California and Virginia, it is 30 minutes or more.

The 200 plus hours that many people spend travelling to and from the office each year is more than many of them spend on vacation. But here is reality bites: your car or commuter train is think that's the right balance.

Luxury or office must-have?

So, what's in all this for employers? Isn't third space working a luxury that benefits people, not businesses?

Many employers remain skeptical—despite the fact it can reduce real estate costs—because they want their staff right in front of them, away from the lure of TV, household chores and video games.

But giving employees more freedom to choose where they work can improve well-being, employer engagement, and performance.

The fact that 72 percent of firms relate productivity to flexible working is evidence of that.

Right, office-based working practices hold corporations back from boosting productivity.

Employees are already beginning to loosen their ties with the fixed office, with the help of third spaces, employers should let them cut the knot. (The author is CEO of Regus Asia.)

PAL ADMIRING MEET As the annual stockholders' meeting, officials of Philippine Airlines (PAL) led by PAL Chair Lucio C. Tan (2nd from right) reported the airline's financial performance for fiscal year 2011-2012. With Tan are (from left) PAL President Ramon S. Ang and PAL Treasurer Harry C. Tan.

Johnny Rockets to increase PH presence

AMERICAN dining chain Johnny Rockets is expected to scale up its presence in the Philippines as its local franchise partners has committed to invest about P1 billion to build a 40-restaurant network in five years.

Johnny Rockets Philippines president Amable Aguilar II said in an interview that the investment chain would be able to generate annual revenues of P5 billion once the 40-store target is achieved.

Banking on increasing consumer affluence in the country, the foreign restaurant chain is currently opened its ninth restaurant in the Philippines at the upscale Harbor Point mall in the Subic special business district.

Aguilar said the group plans to hit its five-year target. Aguilar said "We have a number of locations with the Ayala, Megaworld, Robinsons and Shangri-La malls. Their foray into the major cities outside Metro (Manila) will fuel our expansion program. I think five years to hit 40 stores is feasible."

"The key retail market for the Philippines is growing. The high and middle market is a lucrative segment. Franchising Johnny Rockets is positioned as a direct hit for the most part, we will open 20 more in areas where we can be allowed by malls," Aguilar said.

Johnny Rockets' franchise journey to the Philippines since 2006 to the Aguilar family-led Consuming Foods.

Aguilar is also chief executive officer of Consuming Foods.

Johnny Rockets is also present in Tomas Morato Avenue (Quezon City), Robinsons Galleria (Ortigas), and Eastwood Mall (Quezon City); Burgos Circle in Bonifacio Town Center (Taguig City) and Alabang Town Center (Muntinlupa), which opened in March.

The restaurant chain offers all-American fare such as hamburgers, fries served with a ketchup smiley face and shakes and malts.

With its "home of the dancing servers" proposition, the chain promises to maintain friendly service, upbeat music and spontaneous dance routines.

The location of Johnny Rockets' newest stand in the upscale, three-level Harbor Point mall that opened in April.

Once completed, this lifestyle destination will boast of more than 500 high-end dining and retail establishments, along with water features, parks, free digital connectivity and activity center for concerts and events.

"Johnny Rockets is thrilled to introduce local residents and area visitors to the food, fun and friendliness of classic, feel-good Americana," said Aguilar in a statement during the opening of the latest store to public.

"In Aguilar and his team have opened six restaurants in three years, and operate every location with passion, brand integrity, and commitment to delivering an exceptional guest experience," added Steve Devine, president of Johnny Rockets International. "Our restaurants in the Philippines set the bar for marketing excellence and operational efficiency, around the globe." (Doris C. Dumlao

PH plastics sector taps Japanese firms

By Rina T. Chichioco

THE PHILIPPINE plastics industry, which is reeling from local government restrictions on the use plastic bags, is getting a much-needed shot in the arm from Japanese investors, according to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

During presentations at the recent technical cooperation on the Philippine-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (PJEPA), DTI said new Japanese investments need raw materials for their packaging needs.

They may also explore other product lines that Philippine plastics suppliers can provide to Japan.

"The prospects for business for the plastics manufacturers and packaging materials suppliers are looking up," said Vicente Co, vice president for sales and marketing for Manly Plastics, a member of the Philippine Plastics Industry Association (PPIA).

Plastics firms currently supply to automotive companies like Toyota and can directly sell their product into if given preferential tariffs, Co said.

The PPIA and 15 other industry groups said Friday that there would be some negotiations with local governments' moves to regulate plastic use, such as in the case of Quezon City where operations must use reusable bags or items biodegradable by retail outlets; otherwise, they must pay P2 per plastic bag.

PPIA spokesperson Crispian Lao said the restrictions would negatively impact the plastic bags industries, which employs 175,000 out of the 450,000 workers living off the total industry.

However, other segments of the plastics industry, such as the recycling industries still have room for growth, Lao said.

DTI reported that preliminary studies on the country's first bilateral free trade agreement (FTA) showed increased Japanese investments into the Philippines after the Philippines-Japan FTA took effect.

Japan was the top source of foreign capital pledges in 2011 with P77.24 billion or 30.2 percent share, ahead of the United States (27.5 percent) and the Netherlands (11.1 percent), according to data from the National Economic Coordination Board.

Approved Japanese investments in the Philippines reached P98 billion in 2010 and P79.737 billion in 2009, much more than the P38 billion investments approved in 2007 before the agreement took effect.

Nomura Research Institute of Japan reported big ticket investments entering or expanding in the Philippines starting 2011, amounting to $1.649 billion.

Some of these investments include projects companies like Canon, Brother and Epson.

The technical consultations for Pjepa organized by the DTI is part of the program to enable stakeholders to participate in trade policy formulations and trade negotiations.

Under Article 261 of Pjepa, a general review of the agreement is scheduled every five years, starting in 2011.

Pjepa consultations with the private sector, academe and civil society were launched in mid-2011 and sub-committees are reviewing the FTA.

Two more plenary Pjepa consultations are scheduled in Cebu (Oct. 30) and Davao (Oct. 31).

Impact assessment studies on Pjepa will be presented on those dates. The DTI said that it will be accepting position papers from the industry as part of the consultations process.

DTI Undersecretary Adrian S. Cristobal Jr. said there needs to be an efficient and effective consultation mechanism.

"Trade policy formulation must be more consultative and effective to make sure policy makers and negotiators do not merely rely on economic modelers who are not always up to negotiating parameters," he said.

ADB, P&G test viability of waste-to-energy plant

By Aris G. Ilas

THE ASIAN Development Bank has partnered with Procter & Gamble Co. to explore the possibility of building waste-to-energy plants in the Philippines.

If found viable, the first plant could be placed in the Philippines by 2016, the ADB said.

The project seeks to generate up to 2 megawatts of power using solid waste collected from homes and businesses.

It also aims to eliminate the need for a landfill, as less than 1 percent of the waste is expected to remain after processing and this may be recycled for use in products like asphalt.

Also, the project aims to develop the municipal solid waste management system into a profitable and feasible business model and supply chain for the collection and treatment of municipal solid waste.

ADB said it had approved a technical assistance plan worth $330,000, equivalent to 50 percent of the total cost, to help determine the viability and commercial feasibility of waste-to-energy projects.

P&G is conducting the studies as part of its long-term sustainability goal of having zero consumer or manufacturing waste go to landfills.

It is estimated that around 6,700 tons of solid waste is generated every day in Metro Manila alone, but only 720 tons are recycled or composted, the ADB said.

Global spike pushes up oil import bill

Gov't wants dependency on foreign crude reduced

By Amy R. Remo

HIGHER OIL prices and an increase in the volume of imported petroleum products have jacked up the country's oil import bill by 18 percent to $7.95 billion in the first half of 2012, from the $6.69 billion recorded during the same period last year.

Data gathered by the Inquirer showed that the total volume of imports made by the country's major oil companies and independent players rose slightly by 7.3 percent to 41.06 million barrels from a year-ago level of 37.179 million barrels.

Of the 41.06 million barrels, 30 percent or 12.506 million barrels came in the form of crude imports, while the remaining 67 percent or 28.823 million barrels consisted of refined petroleum products.

Meanwhile, the country's export earnings plunged by 43.6 percent to $656.6 million in the first semester of the year, compared to the $1.02 billion posted a year ago. This decline can be attributed to the 47.9-percent drop in the export volume to 4.806 million barrels during the period from the previous year's 9.273 million barrels.

This has thus brought the country's net oil imports—or crude and petroleum product imports, minus exports—to $6.769 billion in the first six months this year, up about 28 percent from the $5.317 billion posted in the same period last year.

The Philippine government, through the Department of Energy, has been targeting to reduce the country's heavy reliance on fuel imports, to lessen the impact of global oil price volatility on local pump prices.

This is why the DOE has been aggressively moving forward various programs that will hasten the country's own production resources, such as the Philippine Energy Contracting Round, in which the government partners with the private sector to explore and develop prospective energy blocks across the country.

The DOE believes that harnessing local resources will ensure energy security as it will help the country meet its daily oil requirements and reduce the import price of petroleum products. The DOE is targeting to start awarding service contracts within the last quarter of this year under the fourth round of PECR for coal and petroleum.

The DOE is also implementing other projects that will likewise boost the value chain of the Philippines in the event of any global oil price movements, such as the Alternative Fuels Roadmap, which seeks to diversify the Philippine transport fuel mix. The roadmap will see the conversion of existing transport vehicles to run on either biofuel or diesel.

The plan was to convert over 2,000 diesel-run jeepneys to run using liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and natural gas, the cost of which may reach some P200,000 for each unit of jeepney and as such, may require a special financing facility.

It was earlier reported that the DOE is working with multilateral agencies that are willing to lend the government money for this purpose on terms that are commercial wise.

For the buses, the energy department is looking to launch a pilot program to convert 10 buses so these would run on LPG at a cost of P1.500,000 each or a total of P15 million.

DOE now accepting RE project proposals

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy is already open to accepting applications from renewable energy developers wanting to get an allocation from the limited 700-megawatt installation target.

Only those projects that receive an allocation from this installation target—which referred to the total capacity of renewable energy projects that will be allowed to be constructed within a three-year period—will be subject to the feed-in-tariff rates.

"It's not enough to have a service contract. There are other requirements under the eligibility criteria to give [renewable energy developers] the go-signal to proceed with their projects," said Energy Secretary Jose Rene D. Almendras.

The eligibility criteria will be able to narrow down the list of RE developers that will be allowed to put up their projects and avail of the FIT rate, especially since the DOE has already awarded a total of 2605 RE service contracts for projects that have a combined potential capacity of 15,000 MW, or more than seven times the 700-MW installation target.

Under the current installation target, the 200-MW run hydro falls under the hydropower projects; 250-MW for biomass; 50 MW for solar; 200 MW for wind power; and 110 MW for ocean power.

"We'll be ready when people come to us. In fact, for solar there are projects that are starting to come in, wanting to apply for the 50-MW allocation," Almendras added.

Separately, however, Marian P. Corvera, ERC chairman director for the renewable energy management bureau of the DOE said that they have yet to check out the details and procedures for the eligibility criteria in order to ensure a level playing field and ensure that no single player will reap a large portion of the installation target.

Corvera said they are targeting to finalize the criteria before January.

"We have to [come up] with clear criteria in determining which project or developer is really ready and not just have a set deadline. We have to establish a strong basis that the project proponents are ready based on technical performance, number of permits secured and [total] accomplishments," Corvera said.

"We also need to put in a contingent penalty that would really discourage developers to make any misrepresentation or misclassification," she added.

The DOE has also yet to discuss how to allocate the limited capacity in case there is an oversubscription for a particular RE resource—meaning the capacities of the projects that have passed the eligibility criteria will be higher than the installation target set by the government.

Energy Undersecretary Jose M. Layug Jr. earlier said that the DOE will consider four possible options, namely to implement a bidding process and using FIT rates as a ceiling; allocating the capacity equally among developers; implementing a first-come, first-served basis; or allowing developers to talk among themselves as to whose project will proceed first.

The energy official, however, noted that it will be premature to look into the awarding of qualifications considering that most of the RE developers have declared commerciality and that many of them are still studying their options, given the relatively low FIT rates approved by the Energy Regulatory Commission.

Amy R. Remo

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September 5, 2012

This is to advise you that FrieslandCampina Investments Holding Company Philippines, Inc. (the "Bidder") is making a tender offer for all of the issued and outstanding common shares of Alaska Milk Corporation ("AMC") held by AMC shareholders other than the Bidder and its affiliate, Campina Zuivel B.V. (renamed FrieslandCampina Werknemers B.V., hereinafter, "FC Werknemers"). More specifically, the Bidder is offering to acquire all of the issued and outstanding common shares of AMC held by AMC shareholders other than FC Philippines and FC Werknemers at the tender offer price of P24.00 per share.

The acquisition of AMC shares by the Bidder pursuant to the tender offer is being made in connection with and pursuant to the voluntary delisting of AMC from the Philippine Stock Exchange ("PSE") as approved by the Board of Directors of AMC in its meeting held on August 15, 2012. Following completion of the tender offer and subject to the approval of the voluntary delisting by the PSE, all of the issued and outstanding common shares of AMC will be delisted from, and will no longer be available for trading on, the PSE. Accordingly, in compliance with the PSE's Rules on Delisting, the Bidder will conduct a tender offer for all of the issued and outstanding common shares of AMC (14,942,828 common shares, representing approximately 1.69% of AMC's total outstanding capital stock), in accordance with the PSE's Rules on Delisting.

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Measures readied vs FX speculation wave

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is gearing up for a potential rise in currency speculation following the economy's above-target growth performance in the first semester.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said that speculative activities, particularly those that bet on the peso's further appreciation in the coming months, could rise as capital markets normalize upon assurances over the Philippines.

He said the central bank is keenly monitoring market developments and is prepared to impose more regulations to avoid "destabilizing market activities."

"Favorable growth prospects in the Philippines bode for more foreign exchange inflows in the part of the world as economic outlook for the advanced economies continues to be weak," Tetangco told the Inquirer Friday.

The economy, measured in terms of gross domestic product, grew by 6.1 percent in the first semester. The government has set its full-year growth target at 5 to 6 percent.

"We are monitoring developments, including market behavior, to ensure issues are addressed. There is room to use policy tools to address unwarranted movements in the markets," Tetangco added.

In January, the BSP reopened higher capital requirements for banks' holdings of nondeliverable forwards (NDFs)—a hedging instrument meant for clients of banks engaged in export and import activities—to discourage excessive investments in them.

In particular, the central bank slapped a 15-percent capital adequacy ratio (CAR) requirement for NDF holdings of banks, higher than the 10 percent capital cover required for other assets.

The BSP believed some banks were accumulating NDFs not only to serve hedging needs of clients but also to earn from peso speculation. This belief was anchored on the surge in trading volumes for NDFs in late 2011.

Following the imposition of higher capital charges, however, the BSP said trading volumes have reversed to normalize.

In July, the BSP prohibited money changers and foreign exchange dealers (MEDs) from accepting deposits in foreign currency in its special deposit account (SDA) facility. This was in response to the belief that peso buying in the foreign exchange market could have risen partly due to speculation on the local currency's further appreciation.

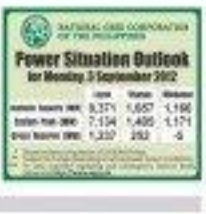
The BSP said making the SDA facility accommodate only domestic funds would help address speculation on the peso.

Tetangco said the central bank is poised to implement more measures against excessive currency speculation should it see signs of this following the release last week of the government's report on the economy's performance for the first half of the year.

Although rising investments in peso-denominated instruments are welcome because these help make the country's capital markets active and vibrant, the BSP said too much speculation should be suspended because of its destabilizing effects, including sharp volatility of the exchange rate.

The BSP said it does not have a bias in favor of a strong or weak peso, but stressed that sudden and too much volatility of the exchange rate hurts businesses and the economy.

Strong economy may encourage peso punters, says Bangko Sentral chief



Peso still among strongest currencies in the region

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE PESO remained one of the biggest gainers among Asian currencies against the US dollar in August, as sustained inflows of foreign portfolio investments and remittances pushed up the Southeast Asian country's ruble.

According to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, the peso appreciated by 4.23 against the greenback from the start of the year to the end of August.

This was one of the strongest rates of appreciation among key Asian currencies, the BSP said, and ranked the peso sixth among the "Asian 5" currencies, which also include the Singaporean dollar, the Malaysian ringgit, the Thai baht and the Indonesian rupiah.

The peso's rate of appreciation as of August, however, was slower than the 5.1 percent registered as of July. The peso closed at 42.86 against the US dollar on Aug. 20, weakest compared with the 41.712 finish at the end of July.

It was he recalled that foreign portfolio investments surged in July, when the country was given an upgrade by its credit rating by Standard & Poor's from eleven jun- one notch below investment grade.

Remittances are also credited for keeping the peso strong. Officials said money from abroad are still growing because of continued employment amid strong global demand for Filipino workers.

Data from the BSP also showed that the peso's volatility as of the end of August stood at 3.30 percent, which was in the middle of the range of volatility of key Asian currencies against the greenback.

Volatility indicates how erratic a currency's value is against another, such as the US dollar, through deviations of its daily rates from the average for a given period.

An appreciation of the peso has its benefits. It helps temper overall increase in consumer prices in the country because it makes the cost of imported goods, such as oil, cheaper in the country's ruble.

However, rise of the peso makes Philippine-made goods costlier in dollar terms, thereby dampening competitiveness of the country's export sector.

Citing both the benefits and drawback of a strong peso, the BSP said it does not have a bias in favor of a strong or weak peso. Instead, the central bank said, it maintains a policy of allowing the exchange rate to be generally market-determined, although it exercises flexibility to buy or sell currencies in the market from time to time just to temper potentially sharp and sudden volatility of the peso.

The peso's rise so far this year has elicited complaints from some exporters, who said the 10-percent growth target for the country's export earnings this year is unlikely to be achieved.

Exporters want the BSP to intervene in the foreign exchange market much more to deliberately weaken the peso against the US dollar.

The BSP, however, stressed that having an exchange rate that would be unpredictable.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo earlier said Filipino exporters should not depend on the exchange rate for competitiveness. Instead, he said, exporters should strive for better productivity by further improving quality of products, by tapping more export markets, and by improving services such as shortening time of goods delivery.

PAL says bird strikes pose safety risk at Naia

By Paolo G. Montecillo

FLAG carrier Philippine Airlines (PAL) said the country may never earn an upgrade from the United States Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) due to the prevalence of birds and the resulting bird strikes near and around the Manila's Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia).

PAL president Ramon S. Ang said the small number of birds in Singapore's Changi Airport, in Los Angeles, declared a sanctuary by the previous administration in 2007, posed a risk to the millions of travelers that fly out of Naia every year.

"It's only here in the Philippines that you will see a bird sanctuary so close to the airport. That endangers the life of all passengers that go to Naia," Ang said.

He recounted a time when several wild ducks were sucked into the engine of a PAL flight leaving for Tacloban last Wednesday morning. The plane had to abort its take-off, and fortunately no one was hurt.

Ang said passengers and crew members on the Tacloban flight should consider themselves lucky. He said ducks and other birds have been known to cause plane crashes in the past, adding drones were the biggest remaining planes.

"What if this happens immediately after take-off, to a plane headed to the US that has over 400 people?" Ang asked, adding that policymakers should move to avoid air strikes.

He said the decision to declare the Lio Pelay Island in Tanauan, Leyte a wildlife sanctuary was ill-advised, considering the number of fowl it puts at risk. About 2,000 migratory birds can be seen in the mangrove forest at any given day. "Have you seen that place? There's so much garbage there. That's why all the birds go there," Ang said.

He said while the presence of the bird sanctuary near the airport would be enough for the FAA not to upgrade the Philippines to Category 1 status—reflecting compliance with international aviation safety standards.

The country's current Category 2 status means local airlines are barred from expanding operations to the US.

BUSINESS

Bernanke raps BIS unity call for central banks

Official says individual policy decisions affect global economy

JACKSON HOLE, Wyo.—The world's big central banks ought to cooperate more by taking into account the global impact of their individual policy decisions, a top policymaker said on Friday, but he was immediately challenged by Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke.

Jaime Caruana, general manager of the Bank for International Settlements, a global forum for central banks, told some of the world's most powerful policymakers that they must recognize the common sense of purpose they showed when fighting the global financial crisis of 2007-09.

"Central banks tend to take a more international perspective, recognize their collective influence and take into account monetary policy spillovers," he told policymakers at the annual retreat here, hosted by the Kansas City Fed.

US and European central bankers are working to restore growth on both sides of the Atlantic, while weighing up the costs and benefits of further action that critics say could contribute to an even more serious financial crisis in the future.

Bernanke, in the audience at the luncheon address, did not flatly reject the suggestion, but he noted that a discussion about international monetary policy cooperation also implied coordination on foreign exchange rates.

"A problem is, of course, that a lot of exchange rate policy is not made by central banks, it is made by finance ministries ... so I think you have opened up a much more complicated coordination problem than central banks sitting together and discussing together."

Caruana cheerfully agreed that he was absolutely correct—drawing general laughter from policymakers that included the governor of the Bank of Japan and president of the Bundesbank as well as the chief of the US central bank—but went to his seats and insisted the question was still legitimate to pose.

Arguing globalization raises allied spillovers from financial market disruptions in one country into another, he added that this indicated the need to take the global impact of domestic policy decisions into account.

"This does not necessarily mean monetary policy coordination at the global level, but it does require central banks to better appreciate, internalize and share the side effects that arise from individual monetary policies," he said.

Caruana also said he was "sympathetic" for calls for central bankers to grant "global consciousness" an explicit role in their decision-making, but doubted this could be formalized.

"The major central banks would not be able to publicly outline the mutual consistency of their policies. Drawing attention to areas of inconsistency and dissent would probably undermine effective cooperation," he said.

During the same gathering, top monetary policymakers were told that cushion-busting financial contagion from troubled neighbors could reduce the risk by strengthening their banks.

The line paper presented during the events was on spotting and mitigating contagion, in which author Kristin Forbes, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, blamed the danger in that of rumor and argued the best defense was to bolster banks.

"Most of the channels of contagion result from a lending interdependence between countries in good times, as well as bad," she wrote in the paper. "Once a negative shock occurs in one country, there are no easy fixes for ending contagion in an integrated world."

His work is mostly Concave that the euro zone crisis could spill from the affected countries to the wider economies currency bloc, and then across the Atlantic to the United States, is a top issue for policymakers and opinions remain deeply divided.

Martin Feldstein, a professor at Harvard who is considered a possible candidate to head the Federal Reserve if Republican Mitt Romney wins the White House on Nov. 6, said the paper highlighted his belief that the creation of the euro zone had deepened cross-border current account imbalances.

He said this should spur policymakers to take the bold step of encouraging the euro to depreciate sharply against the dollar, in order to boost growth through exports in the smaller "peripheral" nations at the heart of the crisis.

Greece, Ireland and Portugal have all avoided bailouts from the rest of the bloc's members. Because they all share the euro, they do not have a national currency they could devalue.

"I continue to believe (what) would be helpful ... would be a significant decline in the value of the euro, perhaps from $1.25 today back to parity with the dollar," Feldstein said during a question-and-answer session after the paper was presented.

Euro zone leaders have signed off on aid of up to 100 billion euros for troubled Spanish banks and agreed to make the European Central Bank the top supervisor for the bloc's lenders.

Reuters

US Airways, AMR evaluate merger deal

Union seen to spawn viable rival for industry leader

AMERICAN Airlines parent AMR Corp. and US Airways Group Inc. have signed a non-disclosure agreement as they evaluate a potential merger that would create an airline to rival leader United Continental Holdings Inc. in scope.

The two carriers said on Friday they signed to share confidential information, work with bankruptcy judge's creditors committee and not talk to third parties about any terms of their possible combination.

Investors has also signed nondisclosure agreements with other parties, according to a source the company said to managers on Friday it did not identify the other parties, but Bloomberg and the Associated Press on Friday reported that British Airways parent International Airlines Group also signed a nondisclosure accord with American.

Representatives of IAG could not immediately be reached for comment.

IAG, a member of the oneworld global alliance of which American is a part, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The company had said earlier this month that it may consider taking a stake in American.

Many analysts consider US Airways to be the leading candidate for AMR, which filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in November. Combined, US Airways and AMR had $27 billion in revenue in 2011, about equal that of United Continental, the world's biggest carrier.

American Airlines initially said it would prefer to emerge from bankruptcy on a standalone basis, but has grudgingly responded to pressure from creditors to consider a merger as its best option by completing with United Continental and Delta Air Lines Inc., which set themselves the products of mergers.

A source familiar with the situation said the nondisclosure agreement is fairly common as it gives the US Airways boss discussions specific terms of a combination with third parties including labor unions and private equity firms that might be interested in a stake in other airlines.

US Airways, which declined to comment beyond the news release, has been aggressively campaigning for a merger with AMR. Earlier this year, US Airways won the backing of three unions that represent American's ramp workers, pilots and flight attendants by promising to protect thousands of jobs post-merger.

Moneygram analyst Jacob Kinker said it would be in the best interests of American and US Airways to combine.

"You would have the international operations of AMR and the lower cost structure of US Airways," Kinker said. "Answers

A US airways plane takes off behind an American Airlines jet at Ronald Reagan National Airport in Washington. American Airlines parent AMR Corp. and US Airways Group Inc. have agreed to share confidential information and work with bankrupt AMR's creditors committee. REUTERS

China manufacturing dipped in Aug.

BEIJING—Chinese manufacturing activity contracted in August to new orders fell, but the slowdown shows signs of leveling out, an industry group said Saturday.

The report by the state-run Federation China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing added its mixed signals about whether China is starting to recover from its deepest economic deceleration since the 2008 global crisis.

The slump comes at a time, the time for the Communist Party, which is preparing to hand power to younger leaders this year.

The federation said its purchasing managers index fell to 49.2 in August from July's 50.1, on a 100-point scale on which numbers below 50 show a contraction.

It was the group's weakest reading to date.

"It shows the economy is moving downward, but is leveling out considering changes in the major sub-indexes," the report said.

Analyst Zhang Liqun said government policies were taking effect, with domestic investment and consumption growing steadily since June.

China's economic growth fell to a three-year low of 7.4 percent in the quarter ending in June, and consumer profits and other indicators have fallen despite government stimulus measures.

Analysts expect an economic recovery late this year or early in 2012 but say it will be too weak to drive global growth without improvements in the United States and Europe.

A preliminary version of a separate PMI by HSBC Corp. also showed August manufacturing widening, falling to 47.9 points from July's 49.0.

The figures followed not very cheerful US indexes...except for manufacturing—were either as or before 50.

The new order index rose 46.7, down 0.5 point from July. The new exports order index remained at 46.6, the same as in July.

The Cabinet minister in charge of China's planning agency said this week that growth was "stabilizing or a slow pace," but gave no details on a date for any new measures.

Beijing has cut interest rates twice since June 1 and is pumping money into the economy by encouraging investment by state companies.

But authorities are moving cautiously after China's huge stimulus in response to the 2008 crisis fueled inflation and a potential building boom. AP

Buffett firm relies less on insurance companies

OMAHA, Nebraska—Warren Buffett's birthday this week was good news for Berkshire Hathaway investors who could welcome another year of the miracle of Omaha's leadership. But the milestone also reminded shareholders they need to think about who will run the evolving conglomerate after Buffett is gone.

The more than 80 businesses that Buffett has assembled at Berkshire are mostly humming along well, posting a profit of more than $3 billion in the most recent quarter. In China, a stock closed at $127.160 on Thursday...less than $1 away from its 52-week high set in early August.

So there's plenty for shareholders to celebrate.

But Buffett's advancing age—he turned 82 on Thursday—coupled with his substantial investment in pursuits outside the insurance business keeps his mortality on the minds of many Berkshire investors. Buffett has said the cancer isn't life-threatening, and he is feeling good.

Buffett has outlined Berkshire's succession plan and reassured investors that he hasn't lost interest in investing and new business candidates, although he won't say who the company's next CEO will be. Buffett is both chief and CEO.

Buffett has no plans to step down, saying he enjoys the deal-making too much, even though he fired Combs a sizable acquisition since buying chemical distributor Lubrizol for $9 billion last year.

Fifteen ideas over Berkshire's other Buffett will inherit is operating conglomerate that is evolving with each new acquisition. The Omaha-based company now relies less on the energy, railroad, insurance and investments it has long been known for and more on industrial, utility and manufacturing companies.

"The insurance is increasingly more of an engine that runs to help the other businesses," said Jeff Matthews, an investor who wrote "Secrets to Have Sight: Business & Investing Secrets of Warren Buffett."

Berkshire Hathaway Inc.'s operating earnings surged more than five-fold in the second quarter to $3.7 billion, but it's even more important now that Lubrizol has been part of Berkshire for nearly a year.

"Even in the face of upcoming environments, the insurance side of the business will never surpass the non-insurance side ever again," said David Rolfe, of Wedgewood Partners, which owns 20 million or its second-biggest investment. AP

Commodity markets witness mixed trading week

LONDON—Commodities faced a mixed week as traders assessed the supply and look and after Federal Reserve chief Ben Bernanke dashed hopes of stimulus measures any time soon in the so-called Jackson Hole speech.

Bernanke, speaking at the Fed's annual global Jackson Hole gathering of central bankers on Friday, called for US economic situation unsatisfactory but offered no new promises of intervention.

However, he confirmed that the Fed would move "if economic conditions warrant," as he labeled the labor market stagnation "a grave concern."

The European Central Bank meanwhile doused hopes of rate cuts with an offer to provided Euro-Draghi pulled short of extending Jackson Hole.

Market hopes had been building that central banks could implement more quantitative easing (QE)—whereby new cash is created and pumped into the economy.

On oil, market sentiment was dictated by speculation over additional central bank stimulus and the potential release of strategic crude stocks, as well as weak data and inventories linked US supply concerns.

Fears about disruption to supply from the US Gulf from Hurricane Irene had lifted prices at the start of the week but, in the end, those concerns proved unfounded.

"The market fears have been torn this week by rumors of a stock pile release and turned again from the economy after US GDP was revised up," said analyst Tom Pendry at Barclays Investment Bank.

Unexpectedly, oil already has a full, and unless the Federal Reserve or the European Central Bank indicates any positive policy measures, this trend is likely to continue next week.

"Many investors feel oil is over-priced and are looking for falls. Meanwhile, although the disruption caused by Hurricane Irene was minimal, this has still kept a downward on prices."

The Gulf of Mexico is the hub of US offshore energy production, accounting for 21 percent of crude oil output and 7.0 percent for natural gas.

Oil prices were also pressured by a call by two the Group of Seven (G7) nations for producers to increase output. G7 finance ministers said they would intervene on Tuesday than crude supply needed to be increased as higher prices posed "substantial risks" to the global economy.

They also suggested that lending individual countries to ready to tap into global strategic oil reserves to keep price pressure down.

By late Friday on London's International Exchange, Brent North Sea crude for delivery in October eased to $114.08 a barrel from $114.79 a week earlier.

On the other hand, gold briefly rebounded to a four-month high as traders focused on the possibility of more asset purchases by the Fed, thwarting the previous initial doubted Bernanke speech.

"The fact that the Fed chairman stated that he 'wouldn't rule out' further asset purchases saw the yellow metal bounce back again," said CMC Markets analyst Michael Hewson.

By late Friday on the London Bullion Market, gold had risen to $1,840.50 in comex from $1,807 a week earlier.

Meanwhile, prices of base metals slid in line with most other commodities.

"Metals continued to consolidate in choppy conditions," said analyst William Adams at Fast Markets.

By late Friday on the London Metal Exchange, copper for delivery in three months dropped to $7,563 a tonne from $7,860 a week earlier.

Sugar for another two-year low in London at $544.80 a ton on the prospect of abundant Australian supplies.

By Friday on LIFFE, London's futures exchange, the price of a ton of white sugar for delivery in October slid to $547.40 from $558.20 a week earlier.

In New York on NYBOT/ICE, the price of unrefined sugar for October dropped to 18.68 US cents a pound from 20.20 cents. AFP

Hermes to protect image with fewer stores

DIDN'T expect to see this brand sign in your neighborhood any time soon.

PARIS, MILAN—French luxury giant Hermes will open fewer new stores over the next five years to protect its high-end image from over-exposure in a retail market where being one of the few places one can furnish rooms to passers by smooth sailing through global financial turmoil.

"Given risks of brand dilution, we must be prudent. We are going to significantly reduce our store openings or renovate and expand the existing stores," chief executive Patrick Thomas said on Friday after publication of the company's close half results.

Hermes, which has 300 stores worldwide, will plans to open most stores in Middle East, Latin America and Asia, but not in Europe, the CEO said. It targets a total of 330 to 360 stores in five years.

The French company belongs to the so-called "absolute" luxury sector, which is the most expensive and fastest growing in the luxury market thanks to demand from emerging markets, particularly China.

This segment currently accounts for 40 billion euros of the 151 billion euro luxury market, according to research from consultancy Bain.

Hermes, maker of 18,000-euro handbags and silk dresses, in which the billionaire owners of rival LVMH Bernard Arnault owns 22.3 percent, raised its annual sales growth target after reporting a double-digit increase in first half revenue and profits.

Hermes is now targeting 12 percent annual growth at constant exchange rates, up from a previous target of 10 percent.

Big-spending Asian tourists, like China's Singapore and Hong Kong contributed to the strong results. Those markets defied slowdown fears by producing 20 percent sales growth in the first half. All product lines, from leather goods to jewelry and watches, grew at double-digit rates.

Thomas said that sales trends in July and August were in line with the first half.

Operating income increased by 22.2 percent in the first half to reach 920.9 million euros, or a 32.1 percent operating profitability, close to the performance achieved last year.

In May the CEO had told Reuters that any business would be difficult because of the turmoil in Europe.

Shares in Hermes rose above 2 percent on Friday, slightly outperforming a firmer French market.

But Hermes confirmed expectations that the operating margin by 2012 would likely fall slightly in the all-time high in 2011 as the group invests to develop its fast-fashion network.

The retail-driven luxury industry is facing margin pressure because of unfavorable exchange rates and higher raw material costs, which could partially pass on to customers, especially in Europe.

Thomas said the group had not increased prices in Europe.

Analysts, however, expect luxury groups will ultimately have to raise prices in Europe, where Chinese tourists buy things as thats at home, to boost sales and profits.

Chairman said the company's profitability will remain outstanding margin between 27.8 percent of sales in 2010 and 31.2 percent in 2011 versus conservative it's compared with the 32.1 percent in the first half. Chairman has a concern estimate of 31 percent.

Hermes sales rose 31.8 percent to 1,509 billion euros in the first half, up 35.4 percent at current exchange rates. Reuters

OECD: Europe must act strongly to tackle crisis

Calm in financial markets offer window of opportunity

JACKSON HOLE, Wyo.—Banking bond markets' subscribers by the European Central Bank, the OECD said on Friday that Europe must seize a "window of opportunity" offered by the relative recent calm of financial markets to tackle the simmering euro-zone debt crisis.

"I think it is now time that the Europeans take advantage of the opportunity exhibited," said Pier Carlo Padoan, chief economist of the Paris-based Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development.

The OECD expressed a respected outside voice on how best to tackle the crisis which, until his comments earlier in the week, had been dominated by European central bank President Mario Draghi.

Padoan said the OECD had been buoyed by a rally in August for euro zone financial markets, particularly for Spanish and Italian bonds, but this remarkable run emerged amid much murkier news in fact now strongest.

"It is time to explain what seems to be a credit-spurring from markets on the European situation, so it is very important that authorities exploit this window of opportunity," he told Reuters in an interview.

Padoan, speaking on the sidelines of the annual Jackson Hole policy retreat hosted by the Kansas City Fed, also made clear his support for bond-stacked buying by the European Central Bank.

"I think it is good to speak in no before the ECB could decide to intervene directly to prop up Spanish and Italian bond markets, Padoan said he did not believe the wide bond spreads of weaker southern European nations reflected economic fundamentals, but rather the fear that one euro zone could break up.

"If that is correct, then the response is that spread has to deal with investing markets that the euro zone will not break up, in addition to the fact that these countries must continue with their structural adjustments," he said.

"So once investors read markets, it is a very important temporary backstop in a wider strategy," he said. "If the ECB comes up with proposals that provide concrete content to the ideas about support of bond markets, that would be really important."

The ECB meets on Sept. 6 to review a plan to buy Italian and Spanish bonds in order to win breathing space for euro zone leaders to figure out a longer-term response to the euro zone's sovereign debt woes.

The plan has met stiff opposition from Germany's Bundesbank, whose president, Jens Weidmann, was also attending the conference on Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming.

Weidmann declined to comment to reporters here about a German press report that he had considered resigning over the issue.

On Friday, Spain's cabinet approved a major financial reform package including the creation of a "bad bank" to buy troubled property assets and bad loans from lenders.

Spain had agreed to push through the changes as a condition for receiving a banking sector rescue loan of up to 100 billion euros ($126 billion) from its euro-zone partners.

Deputy Prime Minister Soraya Saenz de Santamaria said the financial sector reform... Spain's fifth in three years—was needed to get credit flowing again to the economy.

"We must clean up the financial sector to have banks lending again," she told a press conference.

"With this reform, we expect our European commitments," she said.

Spanish banks have been weighed down with rising bad loans and repossessed real estate since the collapse of a property bubble in 2008, which sent the jobless rate soaring to nearly 25 percent.

The "bad bank" will last for between 10 to 15 years and it will buy an as yet undetermined amount of bad loans and foreclosed property from lenders that receive extensive aid, economy Minister Luis de Guindos said.

Spanish banks will receive cash, debt or shares in return for toxic assets transferred to the "bad bank", he added.

The latest reform forces banks to strengthen their balance sheets by raising the ratio of risk-adjusted capital to 9.0 percent of total assets from 8.0 percent.

The legislation also makes it easier for the government to take control of troubled lenders.

"We are establishing the basis so that there will never be another crisis such as this one ever again," the economy minister said.

The Spanish cabinet was set to approve the banking reform last week but the European Commission asked Madrid for a one week delay to give it time to analyze the text.

Olli Rehn, the Economics Affairs commissioner, praised the new measures as "an important signal of Spain's determination to comply fully with the requirements and timeframe set out in the Memorandum of Understanding" on Spain's banking bailout.

"The law provides the necessary legal basis to effectively carry out a comprehensive restructuring of those Spanish financial institutions that are in need of external support," Rehn said. "A sustainable recovery in the Spanish economy requires a healthy, well regulated and effectively supervised banking sector, able to underpin balanced growth and job creation." Reuters, AFP

Lessons learned from billionaires' battle

LONDON—The $5.6-billion legal clash between Russian oligarchs Boris Berezovsky and Roman Abramovich offered a rare window into the lives of the fabulously wealthy.

With judge Elizabeth Gloster ruling Friday in Abramovich's favor, he's back back on 10 things we learned during the testimony.

Oligarchs don't put anything in writing

Gloster pointed out that almost all aspects of the alleged agreements between Berezovsky and Abramovich were in dispute, largely because many of the alleged deals were made orally for over seven years.

Abramovich said the denial this reward was partly intentional: He claimed that he a time, he went along with the fiction that Berezovsky owned part of Abramovich's oil company Sibneft, because Berezovsky's political capital helped protect the business.

An office is no place to meet

Even when they were doing business, the two men rarely met in conventional places of business.

There's meetings took place at all sorts of exotic and exclusive spots: Berezovsky's club in Mustique, on the Riviera in the French Alps; at the Dorchester Hotel in London; in private planes and superyachts; and at various helipads and airports.

Oligarchs don't need to dress up

In one of the trial's most colorful scenes, Abramovich said Berezovsky kept his fellow tycoons waiting for an hour at a high-stakes meeting in 2000 at Lou Aire's Dorchester Hotel, only when he finally showed up he was wearing a dressing gown and looking disheveled.

Berezovsky, who did not confirm his wardrobe choice, claimed that the description was an attempt to smear him and paint him as a Godfather like mafia figure.

A million dollars is nothing

Abramovich said Berezovsky was down to his last $1 million when he fled from Russia in 2000.

"He would not have lived long on that," Abramovich testified.

Witnesses are more effective when they have an incentive

Berezovsky admitted in court that he had promised two potential witnesses 1 percent shares of his judgment—potentially tens of millions of dollars—if he won his case.

An oligarch is most vulnerable when shopping

It wasn't easy for Berezovsky to serve notice that he intended to sue Abramovich.

He told The Associated Press that he carried the legal papers in his car for six months while he tried to track Abramovich down, once making a trip 200 miles (320 kilometers) north of London.

"I even flew to Manchester to a game between Manchester United and Chelsea, but he was with 20 bodyguards. It was impossible to give him papers," Berezovsky said at the time.

Berezovsky finally got his chance on London's swank Sloane Square, where he spotted Abramovich shopping in a Hermes boutique. Berezovsky walked in, to the horror of Abramovich's security detail, and served him.

Every house needs a roof

The Russian word most bandied about during the trial was "krysha," which means roof. It also means political patronage that blurred the line between business, politics and shady mafia dealings.

Abramovich testified that in the 1990s, it was impossible for anyone to build up a major business without the help of someone with business and political connections.

That someone was Berezovsky, who he claimed demanded millions of dollars in return for protection.

From yachts to French vacation homes to girlfriends' bills, Abramovich testified that there was nothing he didn't pay for to subsidize Berezovsky's extravagant lifestyle.

It started with a quack

Abramovich may be one of Russia's wealthiest men today, but his origins are humble. He was orphaned as a child, and lived with relatives. He did not finish college and went straight into business, with his first venture comprised of selling rubber ducks.

It pays to be honest

Gloster's judgment did not use the "L" word, but she did use many her words in calling Berezovsky "an untrustworthy, and inherently unreliable, witness, who regarded 'truth as a transitory, flexible concept, which could be molded to suit his current purposes. He filters the evidence which he gave was deliberately dishonest; sometimes he was clearly making his evidence up as he went along ... at other times, I gained the impression that he was not necessarily being deliberately dishonest, but had deluded himself into believing his own version of events...

"I regret to say that the bottom line of my analysis of Mr. Berezovsky's credibility is that he would have said almost anything to support his case."

Outside court, Berezovsky denied he was dishonest—and instead maintained that Abramovich was the liar.

The winner doesn't really take it all

Sure, Abramovich won the case, but he's not forgot who's laughing all the way to the bank: London's lawyers.

Each party shelled out untold sums to hire some of the world's top lawyers, and legal fees are estimated to be at least tens of millions of pounds.

London lawyers fight a lot of Russian battles—many Russians distrust the legal system in their home—and say they're especially good for lawyers because the disputes are often intensely personal, with each party doing everything it can to win. AP

BORIS Berezovsky, left, and Roman Abramovich are shown walking together in a file photo taken in 2000. The two were once friends together and then became archenemies. AP

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2012

The First Compensation & Benefits Management Congress
September (Sept 3-4)

Rashdrive 2012
September 1-5

Corporate Secretarial Seminar
CSCP Credit Team Building
September (Sept 6)

The 3rd Young Bankers Association
Annual Conference
September (Sept 7)

Wedding Expo Philippines 21st Edition
September (Sept 8)

ASEANA V.I.P. International Seminar
September 9

Johnson Lam Epson Congress
for Business Leaders
September (Sept 11)

23rd Manila International Book Fair
September (Sept 12-16)

Bills Mega
September (Sept 13-16)

Super Web 2012
September (Sept 14-15)

Facets of Wellness
SPD Conference and Exhibit
September (Sept 19-21)

Study Media in U.S. and Canada
A Library Community Education Fair
September 19

The Best of Nature
September (Sept 20-30)

International Coaches Battle
Conference and Expo 2012
September (Sept 21-22)

In the cut of Happiness
Seminar on Active Events Management
September 26

Hotel Show Philippines
September (Sept 26-27)

Green Tech Summit 2012
September (Sept 27-28)

10th Pan Pacific Metal Bug of
Rubber Marine Surveyors and Manufacturing
September (Sept 27)

Manila Auto Travel Association (MATA)
Travel Mart 2012
September (Sept 27-28)

Expo ng mga Barangay sa Pilipinas
National Convention
September (Sept 28)

Seminar on Magna Carta
for Women and Prevention
and Elimination of Violence and Discrimination
Towards Gender Equality
September (Sept 29)

How to Become a Money Magnet
Seminar by John Calub Training Inc.
September (Sept 29)

Digital Influencers Marketing Summit
September 30

Graphic Media 2012
September (Sept 30)

Biotech: Back to the FUP
September 30

New Born Screening Society National Convention
October (Oct 1-2)

Manila 2012 '12
October (Oct 3-4)

Asia Oceania Pediatric Radiology Convention
October (Oct 3-6)

QE Expo 2012: "Challenging the Impossible"
October (Oct 4)

ASEANA V.I.P. International Seminar
October (Oct 4)

Manufacturing Technology World
October (Oct 4)

Food Forward 2012
Philippine Conference & Workshop
October (Oct 10-12)

Biotech ASEAN
October (Oct 11-12)

Philippine Society of Mechanical Engineers
(PSME, INC.) "Diamond" Annual Convention
October (Oct 23-26)

Philippine Fashion Week
Spring/Summer Collection
October (Oct 24)

Manufacturers Night Fair
October (Oct 31)

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Top Losers
Most Active Trading Value
Most Active Trading Volume
Most Active Stocks (Foreign)
Most Active Stocks (Local)
Foreign Trading
Sectoral Indices

Apple targets more Samsung products

iPad maker accused of limiting consumer choice

SEOUL, South Korea—Samsung on Saturday accused Apple of resorting to litigation in an effort to limit consumer choice after the iPhone maker said it was seeking to stop the sale of Galaxy S III smartphones in the United States.

Fresh from its $1 billion court victory over Samsung Electronics Co, Apple Inc., in a separate case, asked a federal district court in San Jose, California, on Friday to add four more products to a list of Samsung goods that Apple says infringe its patents.

The new list of 22 products includes Samsung's flagship smartphone Galaxy S III as well as the Galaxy Note, another popular Android phone.

If the court finds these devices are infringing Apple's patents and irreparable harm to the EA company, it could temporarily halt sales in the US market even before the trial begins.

The latest escalation is part of a larger epic struggle over patents and innovation as one of the most lucrative consumer electronics sectors that is unfolding in 10 countries.

The biggest stakes are in the US, the world's largest smartphone market in 2012. Last month, a jury in the San Jose court found that Samsung had copied Apple's design innovations and Samsung was ordered to pay Apple $1.05 billion.

A SALESWOMAN at Japanese mobile carrier NTT Docomo checks Samsung Galaxy S III smartphone device at an electronic store in Tokyo. REUTERS

Samsung has vowed to appeal the verdict, all the way to the US Supreme Court if necessary.

On Saturday, Samsung denounced Apple's attempt to halt sales of the S III, which hit the 10 million global sales mark in July, less than three months after its debut.

"Apple continues to resort to litigation over modest competition in an effort to limit consumer choice," Samsung said in a statement. "We will continue to take the necessary legal measures to ensure the availability of our innovative products in the United States."

The strong sales of the S III were crucial to driving Samsung's quarterly profit to a record high in the last quarter and helped it stay ahead in the worldwide smartphone market.

In documents filed with San Jose federal district court on Friday, Apple said 21 Samsung smartphones, media players and tablets released after August 2011 were "copycat products."

"Rather than innovate and develop its own technology and a unique Samsung style for its smartphone and tablet computer products, Samsung has chosen to copy Apple's technology, user interface, and innovative style," Apple said in one document.

Apple and Samsung are the world's two largest smartphone makers and together they control over half of the global market. They are embroiled in similar legal battles in Asia, Europe and the United States. AP

16th National Convention
DRUGSTORES ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

STRONGER BONDS...
Strengthening Alliances To Enhance Community Pharmacy Business

Sept. 6 - 8, 2012
Subic Bay Exhibition & Convention Center

MESSAGE

My warmest greetings to the Drugstores Association of the Philippines as you hold your 16th National Convention.

Healthcare is a vital cornerstone of progress, empowering our people to engage in inclusive initiatives and participate in our national endeavors. As we in government strive to invigorate the health sector and widen the availability of its services, may you be strengthened in your solidarity to encourage innovations in the pharmaceutical industry and uplift the lives of our citizens through quality, affordable medicines.

We share the challenge of providing opportunities that enable our citizens to live with dignity. The task requires the collective effort of different sectors to build on the strong foundations of development, enrich current best practices, and foster creativity and integrity. With our shared goal of revitalization, let us consolidate our journey and move on undaunted.

BENIGNO S. AQUINO III

CONVENTION SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 5
03:00 PM - Pre-Registration

SEPTEMBER 6

SEPTEMBER 7

SEPTEMBER 8

REGISTRATION FEE

Regular Attendee Fee	Pre-Registration (On or before July 31)	On-Site Registration (After July 31)
DSAP Member	P 4,800	P 5,200
Non-Member	P 5,000	P 5,200

Registration Fee includes the following convention package:
- Participation in the official convention program
- Convention kit and materials, including Souvenir program
- Meals as specified in the program
- Full access to the exhibits
- Discount privileges for Special Convention Deals

PAYMENT

1. You may deposit payments (cash or check) at any Metro Bank Branch to DSAP Convention Savings Account No.: 357-3-03711021-8, Account name: DSAP up to July 31, 2012 only.
2. Then fax your machine validated deposit slip (DSAP Secretariat at 02-410-5252) — with your duly accomplished registration form, indicate your name and complete address in the deposit slip.
3. DSAP Secretariat will text Confirmation Number which you must present when claiming your convention kit at the Registration Counter on September 6, 2012 at the convention venue. The Confirmation Number serves as proof that registration has been completed. Please contact the DSAP Secretariat if you have not received your confirmation number within two working days from your fax date.
4. DSAP Office accepts personal or company checks within Metro Manila clearing only. Please make checks payable to DSAP.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The registration form, together with payment, must be received by the DSAP Office on or before July 31, 2012 to avail the Pre-Registration Discount. Registration is non-transferable and non-refundable.

For new membership applications or renewal of membership, please contact your local DSAP Chapter before the convention (on or before July 31, 2012) for Pre-Registration and August 31, 2012 for On-Site Registration.

For hotel booking reservations, please be advised that we are strictly implementing the one-is-to-one policy (one room for one delegate). Only the registered delegates will enjoy the discounted rate given by the hotels.

For registration details, please contact:
DSAP registration (09171993707, 09223481100)
or email us at: dsap_office@yahoo.com
*Applicable to members who paid National Affiliation Fees

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Sharp said to get $1.92B from main creditors

OSAKA-MAKING electronics company Sharp Corp will receive an additional 150 billion yen ($1.92 billion) from Mizuho Corporate Bank and Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, helping it stay afloat through the end of the month, the Nikkei business daily reported.

The Japanese LCD TV panel maker, which is weighed down by aggressive competition and sluggish TV demand, is also scrambling for money to refinance billions of dollars of debt maturing in the next years.

Sharp's two main creditors will lend 75 billion yen each, fully backed by property and securities held by Mizuho, the paper said.

The company's stock declined the most in almost a month on Friday on uncertainty over a lineup with Hon Hai Precision Industry Co. Ltd, after the abrupt departure of the Taiwanese company's chair from Japan.

Former-GE Sharp, which also makes screens for Apple Inc. products, is discussing a partnership with Hon Hai that would give the Taiwanese company a 9.9-percent stake and more assets to cut costs.

Earnings agency Standard & Poor downgraded Sharp's debt to junk and said it was keeping a watch for possible further downgrades.

Sharp is in a hurry to flesh out new restructuring measures this month to ensure main financial assistance from its lenders, life insurers and trust banks, the business daily reported. Reuters

BUSINESS

More firms seen hiring workers in Q4

Bangko Sentral cites positive employment outlook index

By Michelle V. Remo

ENTERPRISES in the country are in the mood to hire more workers, with the "employment outlook index" for the fourth quarter hitting the highest on record following a generally upbeat assessment on the Philippine economy.

This was the view of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, which cited the results of one of its latest surveys, showing that the index for hiring expectation of firms in the country at +27.6 percent for the fourth quarter of the year.

This was the highest index registered since the BSP started conducting the quarterly survey in 2008. The index stood at +23.2 percent during the survey held for the fourth quarter of 2011.

The employment outlook index is the difference between the percentage of respondent firms that indicated an intention to hire more workers in the next quarter—in this case, the fourth quarter of 2012—and the percentage of those that said they did not intend to increase their workforce.

"Another indicator supporting expectations of sustained growth momentum in 2012 was the employment outlook index," the BSP said in a report on the results of its latest survey, which was held last month.

The intention to hire more workers came with the plan of some firms to expand operations, the central bank said.

The same survey showed that the index for expansion plans for the fourth quarter of the year stood at +27.0 percent. This was higher than the +26.6 percent recorded for the fourth quarter of last year.

The positive index meant that the percentage of respondent firms that intended to expand operations exceeded that of those without expansion plans, the BSP said.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said the manufacturers of firms in late-workers supported the view that the Philippines could maintain a robust growth throughout the year. As firms hire more employees, he said, their production as well as the consumption of more earning individuals would help the economy keep its growth momentum.

The Philippines grew by 5.9 percent in the second quarter from a year ago, bringing the average growth for the first semester to 6.1 percent. The government has set its full-year growth target at a range of 5 to 6 percent.

The growth of the economy so far this year was owed partly to increased government spending and the recovery of the export sector from last year's contracted earnings.

SEC chief vows to boost investor rights protection

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE HEAD of the Securities and Exchange Commission has vowed to boost investor rights protection in the country by relentlessly running after erring directors and officers of corporations.

In a speech before the Shareholders Association of the Philippines (SharePHIL) last week, SEC Chair Teresita Herbosa said the corporate watchdog was vigilant by pursuing the filing of the appropriate administrative and criminal cases against many directors and officers of corporations.

SharePHIL is a new organization that seeks to promote democratic capital market development through advocacy, education and enlightenment of stockholders.

For the period 2008 to 2010, Herbosa said the cases pursued by the SEC involved the top five violations of section interpretations, fraud in procuring the certificate of registration, sale of unregistered securities, defiance of a lawful order and reconsideration of reportorial requirements.

"For the past year and a half since my appointment, our Enforcement and Prosecution Department (EPD) has been working deep in investigations of several securities law violations, for example insider trading, which as you know involves accountable directors and officers," she said.

Herbosa also disclosed to SharePHIL the SEC's plans to reinforce the required independence of auditors by requiring a "more meaningful and effective method and scope of inspection."

"However, before auditing firms go off like fireworks, presently the SEC is still in the midst of studying the matter," Herbosa added.

In the case of independent directors (IDs), Herbosa said the SEC has just clarified that IDs were are prohibited from taking part in stock option plans provided they would not exceed the maximum allowable stockholdings of 2 percent. "While a few has questioned the propriety of this, in our mind, the objectivity of an ID or any director for that matter is not affected by the number of shares he owns as he should be more interested in increasing the value of the shares he owns he owns."

"On the other hand, the frequent absences of an ID is one that would affect the entire board's decision-making. An ID who is not present deprives minority stockholders, more particularly, representation in the board. Thus, the SEC has not a few times in the past, reprimanded companies who turned on having absentee IDs in their respective board," she said.

LDI LAKPUE DRUG, INC.

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A Manufacturing company of Pharmaceutical & Veterinary Products is in need of the following:

TECHNICAL & SALES REPRESENTATIVES
- Graduate of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy Courses
- Might be assigned either to Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao
- With effective communication skills and have strong personality
- Experience in a related field is an advantage.

BRAND / MARKETING SUPERVISOR/MANAGER
- Graduate of Veterinary Medicine
- Preferably with experience in a related field
- Knowledge in Cock fighting is an advantage.

CHEMIST (CHEMICAL ENGINEER/PHARMACIST)
- Graduate of BS Chemistry, BS Pharmacy and BS Chemical Engineering
- Adept in laboratory and research techniques
- With or w/o license.
- Results driven.
- Preferably with experience in a manufacturing/bottling/pharmaceutical set-up.
- Fresh Graduates are welcome to apply.

MECHANICAL ENGINEER
- Graduate of BS Mechanical Engineering
- Ability to implement systems and provide support
- With Supervisory skills
- Ability to communicate well
- Preferably with licensed and experience in a manufacturing set-up.
- Fresh Graduates are welcome to apply.

HR ASSISTANT (Generalist)
- Graduate of Psychology
- With effective Communication skills
- Experience in Training and Recruitment is an advantage
- Fresh Graduates are welcome to apply.

JR. AUDITOR
- Graduate of Accounting course
- Preferably with experience in conduct of Audit activities.
- Fresh Graduates are welcome to apply
- Can deal with all levels in the organizations.

Interested applicants may email or send us their resumes at hrmail@lakpuedrug.com or apply at 74 LHC Square Bldg. 10th ave. cor. Main ave. Murphy, Cubao, Quezon City

MAGAANAO II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (MAGELCO)
Magsaysay, Dalandan City
Tel. Nos. (088) 856-0418 / 856-0419 / 856-0420
e-mail ad: magelco_2@yahoo.com
Cell Nos. for SMS/Text: 09209-5-MAGELCO

URGENTLY NEEDED
GENERAL MANAGER
FOR
MAGAANAO II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
QUALIFICATIONS:

1) Must be a Filipino citizen at least 30 years of age;
2) Preferably with adequate experience in corporate or cooperative management and familiar with the operations of an electric cooperative;
3) Must be a Professional Engineer with experience in the REC-NEC ORA Category or a college graduate with master's degree in Business Administration, Public Administration or Commerce and the like;
4) Must be of good moral character and with a track record of responsibility in Cooperatives;
5) Not engaged directly or indirectly in any business similar to that being undertaken by the Cooperative;
6) Must not have been found liable in an administrative case by graft investigator or quasi-prosecutor in the performance of his duties or administrative criminal case involving moral turpitude;
7) Must be willing to undergo pre-service and continuing training programs as determined by the Board or by the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA);
8) Not disqualified for any provision of law.

Interested applicants must submit personally the Application Form form and file for the same, together with the above requirements, to the Board Secretariat of the Board of Director's Office, MAGELCO II, Magsaysay, Dalandan City, Pangasinan. For more information, please contact/call the Board Secretary at/or tel. no. 075-656-7135.

Deadline for submission is on October 3, 2012.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

CONDO/TWNHSE

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late DOMINGO GUTIERREZ and MARIA ROSALES GUTIERREZ, both who died intestate, without leaving any will nor last testament, left by the late spouses, Regalado M. Bravo No. 611 Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City, Metro Manila, is now under the administration of Estelanie Gutierrez Bravo, Philippines.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

FEMALE SECRETARY/ADMIN ASSISTANT
MASSAGE THERAPISTS
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Parlors: Salcedo, Makati, Greenbelt, Eastwood, Fairview, Pasig, Alabang, Bonifacio High Street, Ortigas, Trinoma, Quezon Ave.
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Republic of the Philippines
EASTERN VISAYAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Tacloban City

Search for Presidency of Eastern Visayas State University (EVSU)

The Board of Regents of Eastern Visayas State University (EVSU), Tacloban City formally and publicly announces that the Search for Presidency is NOW OPEN!

Minimum Qualifications:

1. Must not be less than forty-five (45) years old and not more than sixty-one (61) years as at the time of application;
2. Must be a natural-born Filipino citizen;
3. Must be a holder of an earned doctorate degree from a reputable Higher Education Institution (HEI);
4. Must have a minimum of five (5) years administrative (President, Vice-President, Dean, Campus Administrator, Director, Department Chair) preferably in the academe, whether in public or private, for at least two (2) years;
5. Must not have been convicted of any administrative offense or of any crime involving moral turpitude.

Documentary Requirements:

Interested applicants must submit one (1) set of original and six (6) sets certified photocopies of the following documents:

1. Formal Application Letter addressed to the Chairperson of CHED:
   HON. PATRICIA B. LICUANAN, Ph.D.
   CHED Chairperson
   4th Floor, HEDC Building, C.P. Garcia Avenue
   UP Diliman, Quezon City
2. Detailed Curriculum Vitae (CV), signed under oath;
3. Certified true copy of documents in support of the data stated in the CV;
4. Applicant's Proposed Vision, Mission, and Development Goals for the University;
5. Testimonial/Clearances from the following government agencies, obtained not more than one (1) month from the date of filing of application, indicating that the applicant has not been convicted of any administrative offense or crime involving moral turpitude:
   - Sandiganbayan
   - Ombudsman (for government employees)
   - Civil Service Commission (CSC)
   - National Bureau of Investigation (NBI)
   - Institution/Company where the applicant is presently employed.
6. NSO-authenticated Birth Certificate;
7. Medical Certificate issued by a Philippine government physician from any accredited government health institutions but not the same institution where the applicant is presently employed;
8. Result of Psychological Examination conducted by a physician from a CHED-recognized accredited health institution but not the same institution where the applicant is presently employed;
9. Duly accomplished CSC Form 212, made under oath.

Important: Above mentioned documentary requirements must be submitted, properly labelled and organized on or before September 14, 2012 to:

Dr. Librada P. Garcia
CHED Regional Office 8
Tacloban City

need a job?
Visit
JOB
Inquirer

CENTRAL PANGASINAN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
San Carlos City, Pangasinan
Tel. 075-572-2011 / 542-2144

INVITATION TO BID

The **Central Pangasinan Electric Cooperative, Inc.** (CENPELCO) with office address at Brgy. II, San Carlos City, Pangasinan invites duly qualified bidders for the supply and delivery of the following electrical materials and equipment:

SCHEDULE I	10/4 Steel Poles
SCHEDULE II	Distribution Power Transformer (1 phase/Conne 230) / Meter base
SCHEDULE III	Distribution Transformer 10MVA
SCHEDULE IV	Electrical Conductors
SCHEDULE V	69 Control Power Cable
SCHEDULE VI	Pole Line Hardware
SCHEDULE VII	Current Transformer

All interested parties shall submit Letter of Intent and secure bidding documents or Invitation to Bidders and Instruction of materials to PBAC secretariat, CPEC Office, from **September 05, 2012 to September 11, 2012** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P1,500.00). Submission of sealed bid will be on **September 14, 2012 (Wednesday) at 2:00 PM (1:00 hrs)** at CENPELCO Main Office Board Room, Poblete St., San Carlos City, Pangasinan where your bid will be opened in your presence in front of your representative.

Respectfully the bidder/s or your accredited agent and representative who is/are present shall be given the first opportunity to examine the contents of the envelope. Please submit ISO/CERO compliance to tax and one half percent (0.5%) of the total bid price if it is a cash or manager's check or if it is surety bond it must be equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the total bid price. All bonds other than the required amount will be automatically disqualified. Bids/proposals submitted beyond the specified date and time will not be accepted.

CENPELCO RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, WAIVE ANY OF THE REQUIRED FORMALITY THEREIN AND ACCEPT TO BID BIDS ONLY DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE COOPERATIVE.

(Sgd.) **GERARDO A. IGNACIO**
PBAC Chairman

Noted by:
(Sgd.) **ENGR. ROMULO R. CORPUZ**
Officer in Charge

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The public is hereby notified that **EMELY H. PRADO** is no longer connected with Uni-Fab Metal Industries, Inc. A WARRANT OF ARREST has been issued against her by the Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 89, Bacoor Cavite, Manila, in all Order dated 25 January 2012, the RTC Branch 89 of Bacoor Cavite has issued a Hold Departure Order (HDO) against **EMELY H. PRADO**.

Any reliable information that could lead to the arrest and prosecution of **EMELY H. PRADO** whose picture appears above, shall merit a reasonable reward.

If you happen to know the whereabouts of **EMELY H. PRADO** you may get in touch with Adrian Enriquez through (0922) 332-5805.

The Management Uni-Fab Metal Industries, Inc.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The public is hereby notified that **MRS. CARMEL LOPEZ y MELLANES**, assistant purchaser of Uni-Fab METAL INDUSTRIES, INC. is no longer connected with the company with office address at 950 Espeleta St., Sta. Cruz, Manila. Any transaction made by this individual for and in behalf of Uni-Fab will not be honored by the management. Please refrain from transacting or executing any business with this person.

Management Uni-Fab Metal Industries, Inc.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The public is hereby notified that **MR. JOSELITO "Joel" REYES y VERDEFLOR**, Senior Account Executive of Uni-Fab METAL INDUSTRIES, INC. is no longer connected with the company with office address at 950 Espeleta St., Sta. Cruz, Manila. Any transaction made by this individual will not be honored by the management. Please refrain from transacting or executing any business with this person.

Management, Uni-Fab Metal Industries, Inc.

"Come and let us return to the Lord; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up."
– Hosea 6:1

MAJOR PEDRO CELIS CABUELA PAP (RET)

August 15, 1923 - August 29, 2012

A World War II veteran and patriot, a loving husband and father peacefully joined his Creator.

His wife, Lilia, and children, Eleanor and Gerry, Herminia, Napoleon and Maria Lilibeth, Margaret and Alfredo, Lourdes, and Ramon, grandchildren, relatives and friends request for prayers for the repose of his soul and assurance of eternal life.

His remains lie in state at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Basa, Pandacan City, and will be transferred today to his residence at 19 Concord Street, Airman's Village, Pulang Lupa Dos, Las Piñas City, interment will be at Golden Haven Memorial Park, Pulang Lupa Dos, Las Piñas City.

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

"Rest"
Norberto De Guia Marzo

His funeral cortege will leave the Funeral Parlor at 2:00 p.m. today, September 3, 2012 for interment at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

"Eternal rest, grant unto him O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace."
John 11:25

ELIGIO "TIGER" HIZON LAGMAN

Former Vice Mayor
City of San Fernando, Pampanga

peacefully joined his Creator on the 30th of August, 2012 at the age of 69.

His bereaved wife Myrna,

children
Noyette and Joel Luna,
Eligio Jr.
Ramon
Jovita and Teddy Manaoleong, Jr.
Paolo †
BJ and Marites

and grandchildren
BJ, Patrick, Joshua, Justin
Louie, Louise, Luigi, LA and Paula
Lenvic, Nikki, Carlo and Xiannetha
Chelsea, Cheska and Raphael
Paolo, Bryan, Tria, Sabina and Ayana

and other relatives wish to express their deepest gratitude for all those who offered masses and prayers, sent flowers and for giving comfort during their time of grief.

His remains lie in state at the family residence at 082 San Agustin, City of San Fernando, Pampanga.

Necrological Services and public viewing will be on September 5, 2012, Wednesday, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Plaza Vidal de Arrocal (Arrieta) of the City Hall, City of San Fernando, Pampanga.
Interment will immediately follow at Sanctuario de San Fernando, San Agustin, City of San Fernando, Pampanga after the 2:00 p.m. mass at San Agustin Parish Church.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
- Copy of Death Certificate
- Any identification document (I.D.)

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CLASSIFIEDS

2012 Publicity Write-Up for the Peñafrancia Festivities

THE DEVOTEES OF OUR LADY of Peñafrancia are anticipating the triumphant celebrations of the Feast Day of "Ina" – Our Virgin of Peñafrancia, the Patroness of Bicolandia, which will be held here in Metro Manila (here, September 6 to 9, 2012).

The well-loved Virgin of Peñafrancia has been awakened for the many graces and miracles that her devotees, especially the Bicolanos, have experienced through these years. This ever-growing need to accompany our Mama amid unbreezeable and who loves unconditionally and without abandon, even if we have lived sinful lives and lost our way, makes the Blessed Mother an eternal presence in our lives. Through the numerous articles, books and stories that have been made about Her, we are reminded that "INA" is always there for us no matter what.

Hail as the Blessed Mother is truly our best intercessor to Her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the 2012 Mercy Manila Peñafrancia activities on a weekend's respite is merry to commemorate the Feast Day of "INA", especially for those who cannot attend the festivities in Naga City.

From September 6 to 9, 2012, we are all given a chance to celebrate the Fiesta of Our Virgin of Peñafrancia here in Manila. On Thursday, Sept. 6, 2012, at 11:00 in the morning, a motorcade from SDC Bldg. at 219 Quezon St., Mandaluyong will accompany "INA" to the Malate Catholic Church (Our Lady of Remedies Parish) in Malate, Manila, after the traditional visit and Holy Mass at the Mandaluyong City Hall and the Shangri-La Mall (Main) Center. At the Malate Catholic Church, there will be a three-day Novena Prayer or Triduum and Holy Mass in honor of "INA" at 6:00 p.m. beginning Thursday, Sept. 6, 2012 until Saturday, Sept. 8, 2012.

On Sunday, Sept. 9, 2012, after the 11 Noon Mass presided by the Bishop/Rev. and the traditional farewell prayers and closing remarks/rites at the Malate Catholic Church, the Virgin of Peñafrancia will, say "INA" will be carried by female devotees in a procession, along Remedios, Mabini, Quirino Avenue, Roxas Blvd., to the designated resting place in Agrifina Circle, Manila for a four-hour novena/recollection/adoration and fellowship open to all in 4:30 p.m., the procession will continue and end at the San Agustin Church in General Luna St., Intramuros, Manila for the nightly vigils of the festivities, a Concelebrated Solemn High Mass on Sunday September 9, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. at the San Agustin Church.

All devotees are invited to attend and participate in the 2012 Festivities of "INA, Our Virgin of Peñafrancia and feel the loving warmth of a True Mother.

For membership and further details, please call the secretariat of the Mercy Manila Peñafrancia Devotees Association, at telephone numbers 531-5177 and 531-5178.

Mga Iv Virgen de Peñafrancia!

QUEZON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Pentol, Pitogo, Quezon
Mobile: 0908 1948 836 / Tel: (042) 621-7157

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Quezon Electric Cooperative, Inc. (QUEZELCO) through its Board of Directors, hereby invites all duly accredited and qualified contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following contracts:

LOT 1	Construction of Pitogo Substation	ABC: Php 7,000,000.00
LOT 2	Construction of Sariaya Substation (Expansion)	ABC: Php 6,000,000.00
LOT 3	Construction of Tayabas Substation (Expansion)	ABC: Php 6,000,000.00
LOT 4	Construction of Lucena Substation (Expansion)	ABC: Php 6,000,000.00

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB license applicable to the contract for the LOTS 1, 2 & 4. Bidders must be pre-qualified through post-qualification bidding in accordance with the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations Part 1, Rule V and Rule XXIII, otherwise known as the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act 9184. The contract shall only be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedures.

Bidding documents (BDs) including plans are as follows:

Advertisement	September 3 and 10, 2012
Issuance of Bid Documents	September 3 to 17, 2012
Pre-Bid Conference	September 7, 2012 at 10:00 AM
Deadline of Bids	September 17, 2012 at 10:00 AM
Opening of Bids	September 17, 2012 at 10:00 AM
Post-Qualification	October 1, 2012
Notice to Proceed	Within 7 calendar days after Contract Signing

Contract Preparation and Signing – Within 10 calendar days after the issuance of Notice of Award

Notice to Proceed – Within 15 calendar days after Contract Signing

Interested Bidders may obtain further information and inspect the Bidding Documents at the office of the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat, during office hours from September 3 to 17, 2012 (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM) and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00).

a. Fee Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P1,500) for LOT 1;
b. Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000) for LOT 2; and
c. Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P2,500) for LOT 3.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the forms stipulated in the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act 9184, namely: cash, cashier's/manager's check, bank draft/guarantee or irrevocable letter of credit issued by a reputable bank, or surety bond callable upon demand in favor of the Quezon Electric Cooperative.

The Board of Directors of Quezelco, Inc. hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect therein, or accept the bid as may be considered most advantageous to the Quezon Electric Cooperative.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. ALEJANDRO V. SARMIENA**
BAC Chairman

Noted by:
(Sgd.) **HERMES C. HALILI**
OIC-General Manager

DTI – Reg. No. 3-2002

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Depēd Complex, Meralco Avenue
Pasig City, Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Department of Education through its BAC on Disposal invites interested bidders/buyers for various scrap equipment, furniture and waste materials on "as is where is" basis.

Minimum Bid: Php 214,613.00

Schedule of Activities:

Issuance of Instruction to Bidders	Sept. 4, 2012
Inspection of goods by the Participating Bidders	Sept. 6-7, 2012
Pre-bid Conference	Sept. 11, 2012
Submission and Opening of Bids	Sept. 14, 2012

The Instruction to Bidders can be secured from the BAC on Disposal Secretariat c/o Property Division, Ground Floor, Teodoro Alonso Building, Depēd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.

The Department of Education reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reasons, waive formality and informality and/or collects in the bids received and to make an award to the bidder/buyer whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.

The Department of Education assumed no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses incurred that they may incur in the preparation of their bid nor does Department of Education guarantee that an award will be made.

For inquiry please call the BAC on Disposal Secretariat at telephone number 633-72-07/636-3602.

(Sgd.) **FRANCISCO M. SAMSILA**
Office of the Undersecretary
For Finance and Administration
Chairman, BAC on Disposal

On January 21, 2012, St. Mary's College of Bulacan launched its student-centered initiative year with a theme: "Rekindling the Ignatian Spirit of Faith, Excellence and Service." It was a well attended event not only the stakeholder's but also several prominent personalities in the locality. The launching was highlighted with schools giving vows, reblessing of commandments, and groundbreaking of Centennial Shrine. This was concluded with the memorandum of MS relation.

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Bringing together the world's brilliant minds

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE PHILIPPINES is a unique utility with—by nature of resources in having inherited and industrious workforce, and, fairly recently, in liquidity as evidenced by the enormous and still growing deposits in banks.

So why is poverty incidence in the country still significant? Why can't the country attract enough foreign direct investment?

As arguable answer to these questions, observers say, is that the Philippines tends to focus too much on politics and lose on economics.

Businessmen and economists say Filipinos should talk about, and work on, development more often. If enough attention is placed on the gradual achieving economic prospects for majority of the population, they say, backwards patterning, furor and capitalize pseudo-of the community would be separately addressed.

This is exactly what the newly established Angara Center for Law and Economics is all about—pushing Filipinos to talk about economic development and empowerment laws to support it.

The research institution does so by bringing together brilliant minds both from within and outside the country to conduct in-depth studies on and hold public discussions of issues concerning progress (or the lack of it).

The Angara Center, which was launched earlier this month, aims to hold conferences where economists from various parts of the world can be invited to speak. They may also contribute research works involving public policies and economic development.

According to economist John Nye, executive director of the Angara Center, the conferences and the researches will help the Philippines engage in global academic discussions and conservative debates on pressing issues affecting the economy.

"The more we integrate into the world debates, the more we benefit in terms of gaining more knowledge and more contacts of people elsewhere in the world in the Philippines," Nye, an economist from George Mason University in Washington D.C., tells StarMoney.

He said the Angara Center shall be a venue for sharing of information that could be helpful in addressing problems dragging the country's growth prospects.

The Angara Center is named after late Senator Juan G. Angara who served as chair of the Philippine Senate Committee on Economic Affairs for 18 years.

Nye said Angara takes the lead in collecting funding and other kinds of support from the private sector for the operations of the institution. Nye, a Filipino who grew up in Marikina City before flying to the United States for his college education, spearheads efforts in inviting local and foreign economists to contribute research works and to speak in public conferences that the institution organizes.

"On one hand, Sen. Angara (who) knows a thing or two about legislation which sound advice (on development issues) should be given to policymakers. On the other, I have been looking for a vehicle through which research can be promoted in the Philippines," Nye says.

"The senator and I agreed that the country needs a venue where (existing public policies supported by rigorous research and analysis," he adds.

Nye, who has written several socio-economic articles for international publications and who is currently director of the Political School of Economics in Moscow, said the Angara Center plans to hold three to four forums every year where experts will present their research and where pressing developmental issues shall be discussed.

A team of Filipino economists, including Leonardo Lanzi and Raul Fabella, among others, was formed to compose the Angara Center's board of advisors.

Nye says the Angara Center will not take any position on any issue. Instead, he says, the institution will simply gather research works contributed by experts, who shall be allowed to present their own research's backed opinions. It is possible for two researchers to have opposing opinions on the same issue, he says. What's important for the Angara Center is to just to public discussions, for purposes of forming appropriate public policies, topics that are of the-for-economic-for-addit.

Nye also says the Angara Center shall also extend grants to locals who may want to contribute research works and who need funds to do so.

In its very first conference held on Aug. 3 at the Hotel Sofitel in Pasay City, the Angara Center had various foreign economists as speakers and reactors to the topic, "Globalization, Innovation, and Economic Growth."

In the conference, the guests urged policymakers to the Philippines to grab the chance the country is become a tiger economy. They said the country's favorable macroeconomic fundamentals—from foreign inflation, robust growth, manageable government debt, to significant foreign exchange reserves—must be backed with efforts to address long-standing bottlenecks to sustainable and equitable growth. Otherwise, opportunity, which is always fleeting, will be lost.

Other factors that could affect the country's ability to attract foreign direct investments, they said, include issues regarding foreign ownership and lack of policies supportive of growth of the industrial sector, among others.

One of guest speakers was Dr. Yifu Lin, a ground director at George Mason University who authored various books. He later was cited, "The Great Stagnation: How America Ate All the Low-Hanging Fruit, Got Sick, and Will (Eventually) Feel Better."

Nye says the Angara Center will bring more international experts to the Philippines for its succeeding conferences. He also expressed confidence that the institution will prompt Filipinos to focus more on the real issue of development.

"The Angara Center will increase the rate the Philippines has to the world academic market; it will improve the standing and reputation of Filipino thinkers and integrate economic concerns of the Philippines to the world," Nye says.

JOHN NYE

Adopting foreign management practices

By Camille Tuazon
Contributor

THE INNOVATIVENESS of Filipinos has been proven over time.

We would often hear people say "Ang galing talaga ng Pinoy!" (The Filipino is really good) when he/she adopted and transformed into concepts or tools that better fit the Filipinos' unique needs.

Sa 'Filipinize' concepts, products, politics, and all sundry services that globalization brings, remaking them in such a way that the word "Filipino" becomes not only a nationality but also a brand.

This very much applies in Human Resources Management (HRM).

The concepts and methods of HRM largely originated from Western viewpoints and are usually being adapted to PH. quite hastily.

The appropriateness of these methods and their effects on organizational outcomes were discussed in a study by Gabang in 2004, wherein the following question was whether HRM practices in one country are applicable to another?

The study

Filipino organizations from the top 1000 corporations were asked to evaluate statements exploring applicability of HRM practices in the United States and Canada to Philippine organizations.

Of the 48 statements, the researcher identified the five most applicable and five least applicable practices to PH. Filipino organizations.

Practically governs the top five practices: Filipinos and Americans agree on the importance of prior relevant work-like work experience in the job being applied for; the propensity of the applicant to learn and improve through training for technical job requirements, which leads to the assurance of the potential to do a good job; and the evaluative merit of performance appraisals.

The least applicable practices reflect cultural and contextual nuances.

The following practices were found to be uncommon to Filipino organizations: hiring the hiring criterion on the applicant's connections and the opinions of his future co-workers; lack of top management support regarding health and safety programs for employees; and a stress on staff acquisition of the pay system to reflect future directions.

Comparisons

When the results of the survey were compared to the US and to German data, it was found that HRM in the Philippines is mostly based on American theories and practices.

Filipinos seem more than adept at applying and practicing foreign methods. However, deep-seated cultural beliefs remain hard to displace, as evidenced by the Filipino organizations's varying reactions and seeming dislike for competitiveness.

We are more inclined to work together than against each other, and we make use of certain methods not because they are the best but because they are most beneficial to all.

Given the above findings, we can say that the designs generated in the 90s's center on valid bases for the HRM practices in the Philippines. Culture and context may cause be organizational or national in essence, affect these adaptations.

What should be noted-ered, on the matter noted, is not the similarity of the practices themselves, but the impact of these practices on employees and organizations.

(Camille Tuazon is a BA Psychology student at Ateneo de College. This article was based on "The transferability question comparing HRM practices with the US and Deutsche" found in the International Journal of Human Resource Management (2004) by Maria Carmen Gabang. For feedback, e-mail us at business@inquirer.com.ph)

Transformative change: The imperative of inclusive growth

MAPP

MAPping THE FUTURE

Alvaro Rivera J. Jimenez

MANY companies often introduce that "business can do well in order to do good."

The question is, how long will "doing well" take? At what rate of profitability will "doing well" be defined? Will there ever be a time when the yield will be enough?

In other words, how will the benefits from the fruits of having done well finally be able to "do good" so that it will help provide relief and equilibrium to those in dire conditions?

These are questions that beg to be asked as CEOs chart the paths of the organizations they lead.

These are the questions better asked as a form of self-examination rather than as a demand from disenfranchised publics.

These are questions whose answers should form part of the 'treasures' out as more palliatives designed to appease.

Business operates amid a pervasive social consciousness that demands accountability for what it does and what is done in its name. Business is called to account as well as highlighting some of the pay system to reflect future directions.

Nye says the Angara Center will not take any position on any issue. Instead, he says, the institution will simply gather research works contributed by experts, who shall be allowed to present their own research's backed opinions. It is possible for two researchers to have opposing opinions on the same issue, he says. What's important for the Angara Center is to just to public discussions, for purposes of forming appropriate public policies, topics that are of the-for-economic-for-addit.

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public maybe in the form of less price they have to pay for these services and products.

It is such a rarity for a company to reduce tariffs on its prices, and more often than not, they do so because of public pressure.

Nevertheless, transformative change is a shift that cannot be turned.

Ultimately, we are speaking of the gains spurred by "social purpose businesses" (SPBs) that are able to make a social impact, generate social value and achieve profitability.

These are organizations that are able to build social relief for their business models in its "doing well by doing good."

A 2008 visionary American writer and humanist Karl Marx had captured the essence of this major paradigm shift: "We have to continually be jumping off cliffs and developing our wings on the way down."

There are encouraging signs.

New leaders are emerging and they are finding creative paths not just to respond to the challenges but also to capitalize on these changes to engage workers and make the growth more inclusive.

The IBM Global CEO study tracks these changing priorities and reports how priorities have changed among leaders over the years.

Brandy rose sets her sets to shape business but is also inspire people because it is able to deliver more value to the society from multiple needs points—through the quality of the products and services, through a genuine partnership with the people they employ, through transparency and consistent ethical standards, through the economical choices they make that preserve and conserve the environment and through the willingness to be accountable for its performances.

Innovation is serving as a catalyst to enable transformative change and inclusive growth.

There are stories of innovations successfully pursued by leading companies where the poor are not abused with bigger and wider populations.

Steps are being taken to partner with communities, encourage entrepreneurship and opening up opportunities for them.

The national initiatives to build tourism infrastructure are expected not only to provide jobs but to instill a strong sense of responsibility to make the developments of destinations sustainable.

Education can reverse underwhelming, appreciation and informed, active participation in developments.

The biggest hurdle is getting people—the ultimate beneficiaries of transformative change—to trust again the institutions that supposedly hail them.

The challenge is restoring hope, confidence and optimism that benefits will cascade down to the most marginalized members of the society, that lives will get better and that there is a bright future that everyone can look forward to.

Transformative change can happen if we will have the courage to lead and the humility to be led.

It can happen if we have the willingness to work for the greater good rather than just for ourselves. It can happen when we engage not only our minds but more so our hearts.

Transformative change can happen when we can reaffirm our faith in the human spirit.

We invite you to come and join to the event in-depth discussion of Transformative Change: The Imperative of Inclusive Growth. This is the 10th International CEO Conference offering of Our Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) to be held on Sept. 13, 2012, Tuesday, from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Rizal Ballroom of the Makati Shangri-La.

The sessions will feature presentations such as Building Bridges for Transformation Through Education; Capitalizing on Opportunities' Change: A Top Priority of Business Leaders; Tracking the Philippine Economy for Inclusive Growth; Branding Value and Valuing the Brand; Transformative Change: The Courage to Lead, The Courage to be Led; and Innovation as a Catalyst for Transformation and Inclusive Growth.

The keynote speaker will be Dr. Jesus Estanislao, chair of the Institute for Solidarity in Asia (ISA) and the Institute of Corporate Directors (ICD).

For reservations/inquiries, please visit www.mapconferences.ph or contact the MAP Secretariat via 751-1149 to 52, map@globelines.com.ph or mapsecretariat.ph@gmail.com.

(The author is member of the MAP CEO Conference Committee, chair of the MAP Health Committee and president and CEO of Health Solutions Corporation. Feedback at mapglobelines.com.ph. For previous articles, please visit www.map.org.ph)

GOINGS-ON

SEAIR appoints new CEO

SEAIR Exel Asian Airlines (SEAIR) has appointed Patrick Tan as the president and chief executive officer of SEAIR.

In his new position as president and CEO of the air cargo company, Tan heads the operations of SEAIR. He guides the development and marketing of new routes and services, as well as building new international ties for SEAIR.

Tan used to be chief operating officer, and was responsible for growing SEAIR revenues from P500 million per year to P1 billion per year. He was in charge of SEAIR sales and marketing activities for seven years, overseeing company relations with more 300 travel agents across the globe.

Tan is also a trustee and vice president for external affairs of Bonsay Foundation Inc., an influential business group for the conservation of the famous island destination, and serves as a consultant to the board of the Flying Medical Samaritans, and is a sailing member of the Manila Yacht Club.

PH chapter of WCD formed

THE PHILIPPINE chapter of Women Corporate Directors also seeks to be formed.

WCD Global co-chair Alexandra Kosivas Foss was in Manila recently and spoke about the WCD initiatives, vision and mission to a small group of women who would be the founding members of The Philippine chapter.

Women's Business Council of the Philippines (WBCP) was represented by its president Cris Juan, members Doris Magsaysay-Ho and Myla Villanueva.

Women interested to join the PH chapter may contact the WBCP Secretariat by sending an email to wbcphilst@gmail.com. Organizational meetings will be announced very soon.

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The diva as painter

Kuh Ledesma returns to her first love

THE ARTIST at work

By Estrella Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

THE CELEBRATED chanteuse Kuh Ledesma, after remarkable success as a pop diva (and self-counting concerts), has gone back to the love of her childhood: painting.

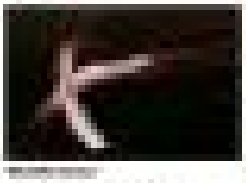
Growing up in Manila, Kuh discovered she could draw and paint well, and so she did, while as a grade-school student at College of the Holy Ghost (now Holy Spirit) and a high schooler at Maryknoll Catholic School.

The students were encouraged to show their works, and Kuh remained her own exhibitor. After the show, she rolled up her paintings, took a taxi—and then unceremoniously left all her works in the cab. The paintings were not retrieved, of course, because the drivers did not know her from Eve.

Kuh being a Born-Again Christian, I ask her: "Did you

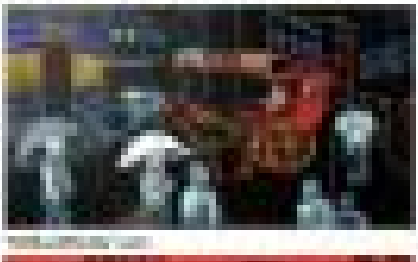
THE DIVA C2

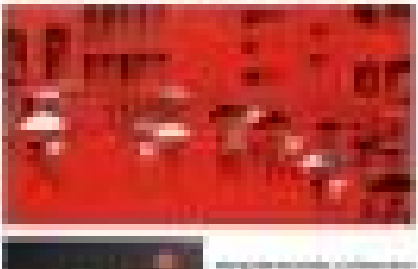
Canon
REAMS OF HOPE

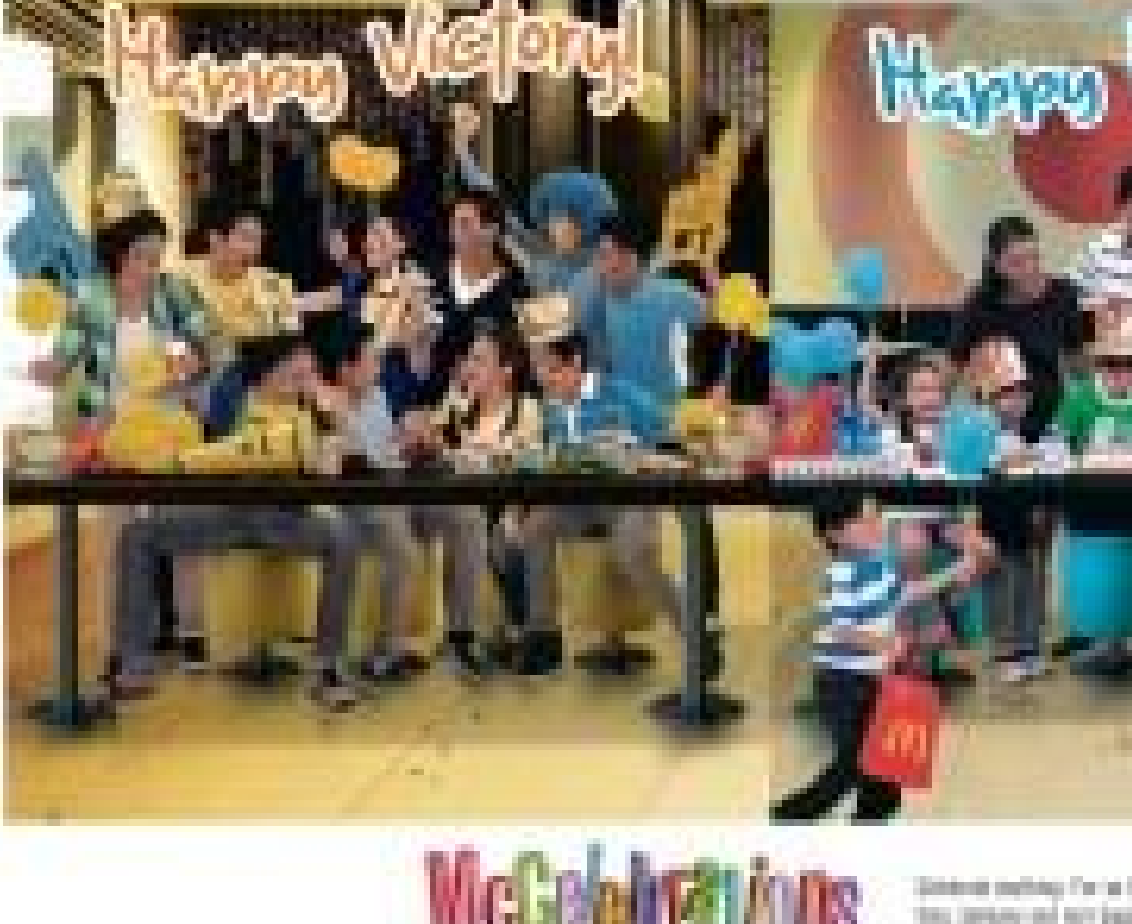


The diva as painter

The cold love of cities in the paintings of Eva Cabrera

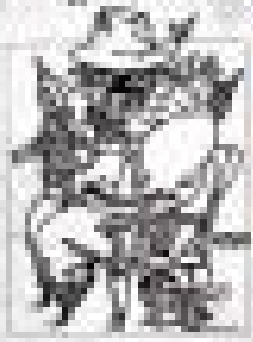




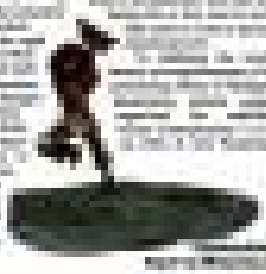


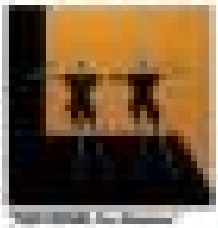
MacCoolbrations

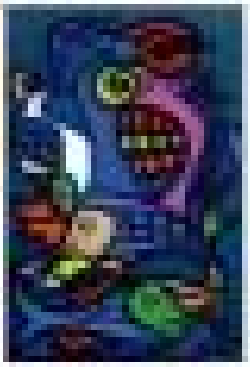
'Papelismo' brings 5 foremost 'paper artists' together



Modernist works at Rockwell







BY ISABLYN Ferrer

Still lifes at Arellana

ARELLANA ART Gallery is hosting the first solo exhibition of Jaypee Pantino, "Underspell."

Pantino is inspired by things old. Growing up in Marikina, he was drawn by simple everyday objects such as earthen wares and rice grain. They have become his subjects.

His paintings of still life usually begin from life. He finds ground in architecture is evident in its palpable quality of chiaroscuro.

Pantino is a full-time faculty at de Jesus-dela Salle University-Manila School.

Arellana Art Gallery is at 2687 FB Harrison St., Pasay City. Call tel. 8520837 or e-mail arellana_gallery@yahoo.com.

Philippine Athletic Sports Foundation, Inc. Ling Ling King, Rachel Hubbell, Andrew Eubank, Brian Hansen, Lakandula grand-son Jo Cruz, Antonio San Diego, Mona Noriega, Rio Edwards, Jennifer Correia, Raphael Bertuzzi

Art auction to benefit the disabled

SALCEDO AUCTIONS is mounting "The Well-Appointed Life," an exclusive one-night exhibition and private sale of fine art, important jewelry, and objects of virtu on Sept. 5, 6:30 p.m. to benefit Abilitypinoy Philippines, a nonprofit organization helping people with disabilities.

Proceeds raised help underwrite Philippine participation in the international Abilympics.

Mona Noriega, president of Abilitypinoy Philippines, chairs the event, supported by board members Antonio San Diego, Raiv Tuason, Ling Ling King, Audrey Tobias and Alice Eduardo.

Works to be auctioned off are by Filipino Old Masters Juan Luna y Novicio, Fabian de la Rosa, Fernando Hidalgo and Jose Arellano; National Artists Victorio Edades, Benedicto Cabrera and Napoleon Abueva; mid-generation artists such as Jonas Medalla, Romeo Tabuena and Cheli Ocampo.

Jewelry pieces and objects of varia from distinguished private collections will also be offered during the evening of high luxury and connoisseurship. Dedicated to upending the good life.

Salcedo Auctions is on the ground floor of Nova Salcedo Place, 121 Jaboneros St., Salcedo Village, Makati City.

Call +63-2-3775865, or e-mail info@salcedoauctions.com.

"RUSTIC Cottages" by Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo

"LANDSCAPE," by Jose Arellano

'Madre y Hijo' exhibit at San Beda Museum

"MADRE Y HIJO," a painting exhibit to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary, will be held at the San Beda Museum in Mendiola, Sept. 6-27.

The exhibit will showcase the work of Ms. Cristina "Cagi" Gallegos Gallery, paintings of the mother-son of the Madonna and Child.

Fr. Jerry Orbos will be officiating the opening prayer and will be cutting the ribbon at 3 p.m. on Sept. 6.

The exhibit is a benefactor for the elderly ladies of St. Scholastica's College, of which Gallegos is an alumna.

"My whole life has been influenced by my Scholastican education and upbringing," says Gallegos. "With Ore of Labors as my motto, I am inspired to give back to the sisters who helped to my formation."

After her creative strife in Chinese painting, ivory bracelets, beaded bracelets and bag charms, quilts and newspaper bags, Gallegos returned to painting nine years ago, concentrating her work on Marian art.

LIFESTYLE Arts&Books

'The terror! The terror!': Brillante Mendoza brilliantly recreates 2001 Abu Sayyaf abductions in 'Captive'

Still in love with 'Phantom'

By Pam Pauze

YOU CAN call them "Phantom of the Opera" veterans. Executive director Arthur Masella, musical supervisor Guy Simpson and producer Dan McFarlane, managing director of The Really Useful Company Asia Pacific, have devoted about two decades of their lives to bringing the longest-running show on Broadway to audiences around the world.

They are in the country for the show's Manila run at the CCP theater opened last week and runs until Oct. 14.

I'm not sure with them at the show's press preview to talk about Andrew Lloyd Webber's music, the incredible show, and why they're still in love with "Phantom" after all those years.

How long have you been working on this? Twenty-two years on and off. Not full-time. It's not a full-time job. Generally speaking, we do one a year. It involves a four-month period. The producers call you about a year ahead to ask if I'm available. The thing is, with "Phantom," I usually make myself available because it's an ongoing job and I really enjoy it.

McFarlane: I've worked for Andrew Lloyd Webber for 16 years, so it's been "Phantom" on and off for most of 16 years.

Then, you've worked with Andrew Lloyd Webber for a while. Was he surprised by how much "Phantom" has gotten from people?

McFarlane: Andrew Lloyd Webber does get asked the question often, as to why he thinks "Phantom" is so popular. And he says he honestly doesn't know. He's had very private thought and maybe this has something to do with it. He feels that everyone of us would like to change something about ourselves. I've heard him say that, and I think that's an interesting take on "Phantom."

Do you ever get sidetracked? What's kept you working on it?

Masella: A few reasons. Until final it very very challenging. It's a very, very complicated show to get done. Each time we do it, we're faced with new challenges, so it never feels boring to me. I love the effect this show has on audiences, and I always find it gratifying when you work so hard and you bring a production to a new country and they embrace it the way they do. That's very fulfilling.

Simpson: The team I work with. We're really close and we're really obsessed with (Andrew) and the quality. And I like it, I'm a bit of a nasty obsessive compulsive in every way. I go to the a bit of a perfectionist. You have to be.

What do you think it is about the show that people love so much for it to be around for so many years?

Masella: I think there's the story. I think they love the music. I think they're transported by the music. Of course, the sets and the costumes bring us to wonderful. But I think people also find that when they come to see the show, they're not disappointed in any way, and they want to come back again and again.

Simpson: When I watch it rehearsed now, after 22 years, this sounds can't but it's like it was done yesterday. It's like it was designed yesterday. It looks incredible. It still looks really fresh. I think it's because it's timeless. The design, of course, is legendary. The music is legendary. It's really is one of those things.

McFarlane: It's such an incredible combination. First of all, it's a story that's timeless and that has universal appeal. It's the most incredibly outrageous production, from the music to the sets and costumes. It's the whole package...it's such a romantic and beautiful show and such glorious music.

Do you remember the first time you watched "Phantom"?

Masella: Believe it or not, it was actually in New York. I did not see the production in London. I was not working on (the) show. I was working on (the) production of "Miss Saigon" for Harold Prince, the original director. I saw it at a performance in New York. I loved it. It was an, sounding, I think the original creative team did a magnificent job.

Simpson: Yes, it was when I was in Australia. I started in 1990 in Melbourne, Melbourne was my first one.

Do you still get goosebumps when you see the show?

Masella: Occasionally. I do. There are periods of time I'm away from the shows doing other things and I come back to it fresh, and when the performers are really good on a particular night, even I, after seeing it thousands of times, I still do. I'm very moved at times.

Simpson: I sometimes do. It's usually because we have got amazing new persons in the show. Those guys change all the time in different countries. When they're really good, oh yeah, right.

McFarlane: I do, absolutely. I've seen it many times. I can't say I've ever remember but I still went particularly for this final scene when Christine comes back and you just see the agony on the Phantom's face and in his voice. You can't help but be moved by that. And if you've got a really good Phantom like we've got here, it's just heart-wrenching even after seeing the show hundreds of times.

How does it feel to be bringing the show to the Philippines?

Masella: It feels wonderful, it really does. All of us who work on this show know we have a very precious thing, and we are very conscious of that, and we are very careful to treat it carefully and do the best we can to bring the best production we possibly can. So for the first few audiences that we've had have responded tremendously (standing, screaming ovation). It's just wonderful, wonderful.

Simpson: Well, I've been here a number of times, with "Miss Saigon," particularly, and my involvement with that dates back quite a few years. Coming back here and seeing my old friends, it's fun. The city is chaotic at times but you just gotta go with that. I highly enjoy being here.

McFarlane: I feel really proud. From our office in the Asia Pacific we've been developing audiences for Andrew Lloyd Webber's shows throughout Asia, and it's great that the Philippines is one of the newest sights. This is the second show we brought here after "Cats," and "Phantom" is the big one. I think it does a lot to develop interest in musical theater. It's not just about "Phantom" season. It's a longer-term benefit for everybody.

What was the biggest challenge for you?

Simpson: Well, I thought it was going to be finding the musicians. But it wasn't.

It's been a very strange experience.

McFarlane: I think for everybody it's got to be for the Phantom. He's such a complex character, someone who's capable of wonderful people but also capable of incredible tenderness.

"The Phantom of the Opera" runs at the CCP until Oct. 14. It is produced by Lunchbox Theatre Productions, Inland Arkin Enterprises, 40 Definition Radio Inc. and Concerton in association with The Really Useful Group. For tickets, call Ticketworld at 8819999 or visit www.ticketworld.com.ph.

Tim McFarlane PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES

ARTHUR Masella

GUY Simpson

Masella, Simpson and McFarlane have devoted two decades of their lives to bringing 'Phantom' to audiences worldwide

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Pinoys in 'Phantom'

By Pam Pauze

MONTHS BEFORE the Manila production of "The Phantom of the Opera" opened at the CCP, auditions were held for Filipino musicians who wanted to be part of the orchestra.

Fourteen were successful and are now part of the talented 17-piece orchestra that brings the beautiful music of Andrew Lloyd Webber to life in every show.

At the press preview of "The Phantom of the Opera," Lifestyle spoke to three of them—pianist Mary Anne Espina, one of the show's keyboardists; violinist Denise Hwang and percussionist Daniel Bartolome.

When did you discover your love for music?

Espina: Maski pa ako (Laughs) it long, long time ago, when I started taking up piano when I was turning four, I think. I never stopped.

Hwang: I started when I was six from the very start, it's been the violin.

Bartolome: I started late. But my parents, my brother, my sister, they were all musicians. Eventually, like them, I became a musician.

How did you end up choosing the instrument you're mastered?

Fourteen out of the 17 orchestra musicians in the Manila production of 'The Phantom of the Opera' are Filipino. We spoke to three of them

MARY Anne Espina, Denise Hwang, Daniel Bartolome PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES

Which of the songs in "Phantom" is your favorite to play?

Espina: Of course, the theme song, "Phantom of the Opera."

Hwang: I like "The Music of the Night."

Bartolome: Me, too, I like "The Music of the Night."

Why do you think people love "Phantom"?

Espina: It's the overall production. It's really amazing, it's so magical, not just the music, but the full production as well. When we watch it... oh my god.

Hwang: The music is great. If you close your eyes and just listen to the music, it's beautiful.

Espina: Quite.

Bartolome: Genius.

Hwang: But the thing is that when you really come and watch the show and you see the costumes and the set and how everything is... oh my gosh. Amazing.

Bartolome: It's magic. Maybe it's because of the story behind it. There's love and jealousy.

So, you still get goosebumps when you play the song?

Espina: Yeah, of course.

Hwang: All the time. All the time.

How does it feel to be a part of this production?

Espina: We're so lucky, we're so privileged to be a part of this really, really big production.

Are your families excited? How they seen the show?

Espina: Yes.

Bartolome: Yes.

Hwang: My family's nerves.

What is it like working with the people who flew in for the show?

Espina: They're amazing people. They're so nice, they're very helpful.

How have the shows been so far?

Espina: We've done three so far and it's always full house.

And standing ovations?

Bartolome: Yes.

Hwang: All the time.

What other musicals would you like to be a part of? Do you have a list of dream musicals?

Espina: Actually, I was a part of "Miss Saigon" already. That was 12 years ago. I worked with Guy (Simpson) back then. And now, I get to work with him again which is great.

Hwang: Okay so not. The fact that I've done "Phantom" is already perfect.

Bartolome: Maybe "Phantom," "Phantom" and "Phantom." (Laughs)

Assumption College to mount musical drama 'Prometheus'

THE METTA dance company of Assumption College at San Lorenzo Village, Makati, will present "The Myth of Prometheus and Pandora" starting Sept. 5.

A house of modern text and original poetry written by Philip Valdes and Jun Valdes-Lim, the musical drama is an allegorical tale about Prometheus' journey toward self-discovery and current leadership.

The drama features Sheila O'Hara, Russell Legaspi, JV Estipuman and Theater Arts students of Assumption College. Jim designs is by Billy Yost and music composed by Philip Valdes.

Show dates are Sept. 5, 7, 14, 15, 21, 28 and Oct. 5, at 7 p.m.

For more information, call 8902681 or 0917.7306033.

FILIPINO musicians at "The Phantom of the Opera" orchestra pit

SCENE from "The Myth of Prometheus and Pandora"

BEDSIDE READING

What books are you reading?

Mahar Mangahas

Fellow Social Weather Stations, Ateneo economics professor (Social Climate)

I JUST finished a few days ago "The Mystery of Olga Chekhova," by Antony Beevor (biography).

Half-done: "Nimona," by Jean-Paul Kaiser (novel).

Newly started: "The Orange Girl," by Jostein Gaarder (novel).

Next in line: "Broke: The Baseball Myth," by Antony Beevor (history).

One book leads to another. Some weeks ago I came across "Broke Blues," by Anonymous, about how a German woman coped with the Russian invasion in 1945. So I borrowed the only Antonia Fraser Beevor, whom I rarely admire, but has top-end his books on Stalingrad and the Spanish Civil War proved epic, meant to say that the diary is genuine.

It's about how she (a journalist who could speak German) had to act like a confident woman in order to survive. Her diary was confiscated by the Russians, but she managed to retrieve it after the war. Then she

'The terror! The terror!': Brillante Mendoza brilliantly recreates 2001 Abu Sayyaf abductions in 'Captive'

By Lito B. Zulueta

BRILLANTE Mendoza overcame compellingly the horrors of the 2001 Abu Sayyaf kidnapping in "Captive," perhaps the most forthright movie made yet on the Muslim Mindanao problem. Firstly drawing from Ceasar Bardarison's 2003 book, "In the Presence of My Enemies," which details the 377-day ordeal that the Protestant missionary and her husband Martin suffered at the hands of the Abu Sayyaf, the 2009 Cannes Film Festival best director weaves a fictional account of the infamous abduction that has, however, the ring and texture of the real thing. The result is the most realistic cinematic treatment yet of Muslim terrorism.

A French-Filipino-Germano-British co-production, "Captive" stands Gracia Manilloux as Therese Bergonio, a Christian missionary and social worker just wooed by the celebrated French actress Isabelle Huppert. Although Bergonio is married, her husband and children are back home and she's abducted with her (ex-) head guide (a very energetic Nadiri Cerpio).

Together with locals and other foreigners, Therese is brought to the high seas through a thumpy (speedboat) and transferred to an outrigger. The band proceeds and occupy the Dr. José Marcos Torres Hospital and the adjacent St. Peter's Church in Lantawan, Basilan, where they demand ransom from the authorities. Therese witnesses the payment of the ransom by local and military authorities, replicating the actual negotiations in Zamboanga's hook in which the claims that military officers were demanding a cut from the ransom and asked the Abu Sayyaf to share belongs for ransom operations.

Despite the payment, the military mysteriously orders an assault of the hospital and the church. Still, the rebels with hostages in tow, slip through, allowing the claims of the real events that the military had allowed the terrorists to escape [illegible] of food) were in the mix) and had gotten a cut from the ransom. "Captive" shows that the assault may be just the military's way of demanding a bigger cut or crown heads hastily staged for the media. As helicopters rain fire on the hospital-church complex, what remains of the terrorists (Archie Adamos) incidentally as the split. "Who are they fighting there?" (Abu Sabaya, the terrorist leader, claimed that he and his comrades had paid local and military officials to allow them to escape.)

As the abductees take them deeper into the jungles of Basilan, Therese and the other prisoners go deeper into the heart of darkness. A great scare takes them when before the camera darting an interview with broadcast journalist Angela Lacsa, who plays herself in the movie to register the noninvolvement and innocence she did of the hostage-taking in 2000. "If but leave here," Therese says. "It's a nightmare," the other foreign captives say. Despite the constant reminders that the military is in hot pursuit of the terrorists and their captives, the Europeans prioritize examples that they have not been rescued or released.

Protracted conflict

In focusing on the hostages' existential captivity, Mendoza administers the protracted state of affairs that have allowed the Muslim Mindanao conflict to fester and for kidnap-for-ransom terror to gangrene Southern Mindanao. Mendoza has limited his lens protagonists but there's no real insight to the problem's largely because the military has been sidelining it on the outskirts, mysteriously supports the rebels' fierce willing antics and announcement to the rebels and pocketing kickbacks from logistics and military procurement.

The government and the military have been managed to profit from the kidnap-for-ransom syndrome. In her book, Burnham writes that members of the armed forces of the Philippines provided her, Martin and other local by the bandits. She says she was told it was because the Abu Sayyaf was "shooting and dealing" with the generals of the region, who received a cut of the ransom. She adds the bandits offered 20 percent, but that the general wanted 50 percent.

The movie likewise shows that ransom had indeed been paid for the release—especially of affluent prisoners, the businessman Reghis Romero. Despite denials by authorities, Gen. Sergio Cruz, the 11, in late 2001, said he helped deliver P17 million in ransom to the Abu Sayyaf hostages for the release of businessman Romero in June. "3 more ransoms was paid by Reghis Romero because [the government] won't say help in paying the ransom," he said.)

The movie reminds us that the Dos Palmas incident took place three months before 9/11 and prefigured the horrors of Islamic extremism, and that the Abu Sayyaf was allied with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Al Qaida. The movie shows the terrorists entering MILF-protected territories and arrogantly cache of high-powered firearms from Arab guests who promise to send more and soon. (In her book, Burnham writes that her captors told Martin Burnham to say in a ransom message that he was being held by "the Guerilla [sic] Army group.") A short scene shows the European captives huddled over the terrorists' radio and hearing the Twin Towers attack and Therese asking incredulously, "They're twin towers, attacking America?" while the Abu Sayyaf men shout fatalistically "Allah Akbar!"

No exaggeration

Mendoza doesn't exaggerate the awareness of the terrorists. His characters don't preach—the closest to wanderers of their religious ordinary while also showing their human side. Against the general hostility of the men, the leader (Emmanuel Bagamina) is gallant and gentlemanly, apologizing to [illegible] and offering food for the [illegible]. He says she was told it was because the Abu Sayyaf was "shooting and dealing" with the generals of the region, who received a cut of the ransom. She adds the bandits offered 20 percent, but that the general wanted 50 percent.

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Humanity

Amid the carnage and the pro-forma demonstration they're subjected to, the abductees' all, mutually maintain their humanity. They share food and manage provisions; the nurse and medical interveners apply emergency treatment on those wounded by crossfire while farmworkers having exposed to the same risk; the hostages band together and provide comfort to one another, especially when it becomes increasingly evident that their government won't relent in their no-ransom policy. Of [illegible] and friendship, blame your government," she critiqued Abu Sayyaf negotiator tells them.)

Therese maintains her sanity through all the difficult order by keeping in touch with her human [illegible]. Although she never loses her objectivity and relates her confusion to the negotiations, she identifies Hamad, the boy warrior who retrieved her slippers which she had lost during one of several excursions between the Abu Sayyaf and the army. She wants his brother and his father sufficiently warms up to re-confide to her that he has never gone back to studies since the time he got home from school and found his parents dead, slain by the army.

Visual-language mastery

Those who have accused Mendoza of indecisive/lax filmmaking in "Kinatay" and "Serbis" should watch "Captive." Confronted with a real-life terrorist incident of unanticipated horror and protracted torment, Mendoza displays mastery of visual language and skillfully calibrates sequences of carnage and anxiety with serene, transcendent set tickets.

When the Abu Sayyaf decides to execute a Caucasian hostage for stepping out the Quran and [illegible] in response to the negotiations, the violence is prefigured in a montage of the younger terrorists playing games and [illegible] (with head of a purple fruit). The execution borders on the [illegible] of the Abu Sayyaf when they killed the American Guillermo Sobero in 2001; "We will send his head to President Macapagal-Arroyo as gift for Philippine Independence Day!"

Which does not mean Mendoza [illegible] on the violence. As always, the director of "Kinatay" does not alienate or partially the horrors of an inherently violent situation. He shows the news report announcing a soldier, the latter's hacked nape visibly visible in close-up, and taping the mutilated torso (Angel Aquino). He shows, the Abu Sayyaf hacking the security guards from Dos Palmas as they try to run for their lives. He shows the violence of hostilities in hostile scenes that are the most realistic yet in Philippine cinema.

As always, too, Mendoza demonstrates his exceptional skills as production designer and cinematographer to realize the setting and background theft with life and embody the travails of the prisoners. In "Captive," he makes the forest patina with exquisite eerie silver beauty. A breathtaking overhead shot of the forest and the nearby lake hovers in the air and then dips down toward the crowns of trees, then down land further, showing Therese recently seized from her sleep, while guns seen a last brief, and in the forms, she finds the threatening arm during Isabelle's sleeping figure. When she wakes her up, she finds her faithful companion dead out of exhaustion.

Director Mendoza shows deadly suspense crowding at the last of the captives, representing the danger that perennially lies in wait for them at the people. Moreover, after the rebels retribute and wipe out a whole platoon of army soldiers, Mendoza presents the carnage of a similar encounter, a tied, then going quickly for the kill.

Isabelle Huppert

As Therese, Huppert admirably delivers an emotionally physically draining and emotionally demanding performance. Never for once takes by the abductees' illness and [illegible] and like Gracia Manilloux who is [illegible] as the Protestant of My Enemies," never for once mistake the enemy for a friend. Huppert's frightening character is Chabrol's "Merci Pour le Chocolat" around the immortal line, "I have a knack for doing something wrong." In Mendoza's "Captive," Huppert's character shows a knack for getting into an awfully wrong situation but prevailing nevertheless, even what may.

Her ordeal may have been alleviated by the occasional kindness of the negotiators, particularly of Jolo Jolo, but Therese knows she's going through hell and should bear it with Christian faith and hope. In a crucial scene, she orders up with tainted bottle her her reliably outrageous son, and relieving herself, catches sight of the Southern Cross, the mythical Hamas bird. When she follows the bearer-led bird into a clearing, she's awaken from her reverie by trained pointing rejoiced her and arousing her of trying to flee.

The movie of danger realistic, so rare in the mercilessly unreassuring movie of Brillante Mendoza, sums up the sense of powerlessness characterizes the existence in Mindanao. In such a situation, [illegible] many times over—by Jesus and Mary—for the mercy of terrorist bullet, and by the state Muslim terror dyahol into the Abu Sayyaf inside against his will—there's really not much choice. Everyone becomes a captive of one's unrelentingly incomprehensible situation.

'Captive' will open in cinemas nationwide on Sept. 5

CLOCKWISE, from above: THERESE (Huppert) in the presence of her enemies, the Abu Sayyaf Dul Lucero and Ronnie Lucero's nurse (Angel Aquino) consoles Therese (Huppert); Brillante Mendoza on the set of "Captive" with Isabelle Huppert; Therese (Huppert) and Soledad (Carpio) go deeper into the jungle with the Abu Sayyaf.

ENTERTAINMENT
Editor Erwin G. Velarde

Bizarre cameo

LOS ANGELES — Clint Eastwood's bizarre cameo at the Republican National Convention drew some scathing reviews Friday from his movie-industry colleagues in traditionally Democrat-leaning Hollywood. The Oscar-winning actor-director's caged dockside comment on the rambling performance in which the 82-year-old star chatted with an invisible Barack Obama. His dialogue with an empty chair was judged to be the offensive by some critics. Forget Dirty next. "He didn't need to do this to himself. It's unsettling on hers." AFP

DID YOU KNOW...

Amalia, Liezl kiss and make up

MAMA Marna and Liezel at the birthday party, right, fashionable mom and little daughter wear matching outfits, left.

"At the end of the day, I'm still proud of how you raised me ... I'm so lucky to have you"

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

MY "SECOND MOM," Amalia Fuentes, celebrated her 72nd birthday at Barrio Fiesta on Aug. 27. It was my intimate gathering of family and close friends, devoid of those bit fanfare which made the occasion more commingled.

"I've never felt as loved as I do tonight," Marna Neza gushed. "Everyone close to my heart is present."

Her pacey turned out to be extra special because her granddaughter, Ahaesma, had just recovered after several weeks of hospital confinement.

A considerably thanksgiving Mass was presided over by the Multidos' favorite priest and Marna Neza's confessor, Father Armand Tungol, with Fr. Ted Lopez and Fr. Joey Faustino.

The lovely girl was visibly eyed during her speech after the Mass: "My heart is overflowing with joy. After all the trials ... that my daughter Liezl and I have gone through, all the wounds are healed."

Having been privy to their colorful and dramatic mother-daughter saga, I'm more than happy that Marna Neza and Liezl are again closer than ever.

The sweet death of Joey Stevens (Liezl's reputed who loved her like his own), Liezl's bout with cancer (which she has triumphed over), and the show his squabble Marna Neza is embroiled to can be too much to handle. But these storms have solidified their mother-daughter relationship.

'Just my mom'

"Family is family things," Marna Neza said. "Good and I confined things up when things get rough. She support gives me all the strength that I need. So, even if I'm facing a show biz war, nobody can harm me because I have Liezl, my spur and mother-brother me."

Liezl echoed those sentiments. "I with my mom the best of health always. I've come to realize that the most important things in life are family and good health. I love her very much and will always be behind her, no matter what."

On Liezl's Facebook page, she posted this greeting that read in part: "In the end of the day, I am still proud of how you raised me ... and gave me all the best things that you could! I got my love for travel from you ... fighting for family, and of course my love for actors. Elizabeth Taylor of the Philippines ... Queen of Philippine movies ... you are still not my ex and only source ... I am so lucky to have you!"

Marna Neza said Liezl have come to look more and more like each other. And now they also feel and think the same way, which makes them understand each other better. From now on, they may just be arguing about who loves the other more.

The Usual Excuses For Not Losing Weight

WHAT'S YOUR EXCUSE?

1 The Workaholic: "I don't have time to go to the gym or prepare for a marathon. I'm busy – I'll talk to you later."
At Marie France, you'll be lying down the whole time we administer the treatments. So you can take your smartphone and tablet with you, read emails or work while you're at it. In just 25 minutes, you can burn up to 2,000 calories with our fat-burning FMS!

2 The Lazy One: "Lose weight! Like, exercise? Er... maybe after my nap."
If exercise isn't your weight-loss method of choice, would you prefer lying in a relaxed position, in your own private room, while someone does the work for you instead? Imagine getting the same effects of 225 sit-ups while you're comfortably lying down. And you don't feel tired afterwards.

3 The Shy Type: "I don't want people to know I'm trying to lose weight."
We completely understand you. At Marie France, we can assure you that all your personal data, treatment records and other information will be kept totally confidential. You have a dedicated team composed of doctors, nutritionists, fitness counselors to help you get the body you want.

4 The Saver: "I don't want to spend much money on weight-loss. What if it doesn't work?"
We wouldn't want you to waste your money either. That's why we're giving you a **MONEY BACK GUARANTEE** at Marie France. Just sign up for our Pre-Plus Program, which entitles you to get your money back if you don't lose any weight at all during the program period.

5 The Pessimist: "Marie France treatments? I heard they don't work all the time."
We're confident that our treatments will work for you, which is why we're willing to offer you a **Money Back Guarantee.** Just follow our program, and we assure you – YOU WILL ACHIEVE THE AGREED WEIGHT LOSS. And if you don't, you get your money back. No if's or but's. That's the real guarantee.

6 The Cynic: "I'm still not convinced."
We respect your reasons, but we're open to answering all your questions during a one-on-one consultation – absolutely FREE. What have you got to lose? Just call us at 894-BODY (2639) so we can book you an appointment immediately!

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GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

A LIFFIN — BY JOSS AGUIRRE

FUSAO BABOY — BY RYL LUNOR

DICK TRACY — BY JOE DEFALCO AND MIKE CURTIS

LOVEWAYS — BY ELIZABETH CHONGLO

MARY WORTH — BY JOHN SCOTT

BIKO PACHINE — BY PHAGE ABRERA

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

HUTTS — BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

SHERMAN'S LAGOON — BY JIM TOOMEY

DUSTIN — BY STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF MAKER

TALBOK — BY MARIA CELL

HOROSCOPE

BY DOMICIS BOMB

ARIES (March 21 to April 20) You'll have no trouble attracting your best interests in conversations about recent projects. Hopefully, you'll have matters on hold for Bulls or Libertines. You're going to love it!

TAURUS (April 21 to May 20) Don't be quick to disassociate with others today. However, you might attract someone who is quirky? Watch the rules. Get the paperwork.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) You have bright ideas about how to streamline improvements at work. Sparks fly between the two of you, teaching children or professional sports might take home many of those things. An bold street fighting spirit illustrator.

CANCER (June 22 to July 22) Think of you who you're involved in the entertainment world, the beneficiary. Watch it's, teaching children or professional sports might take home many of those things. An bold street fighting spirit illustrator.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) You can introduce new concepts when you live today. Most especially in areas related to writing, bathroom, health or even something to do with counseling and guidance. Does you live on?

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) You are in a persuasive today. Your words have normal have your other people's ears. Be gentle. Long-time friend is outraged.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 23) You are in very vibrant today in dreaming up ways to earn money, or make money on the side. You also might can see ways for controlling your of costly over.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Take a realistic look at the career and see yourself what you can do to make a better impression on your world. You also might think about ways to improve how you relate to those who you love.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Research of you don't will go well today. If you're seeking answers to problems, you'll find them. You won't give up.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Get to know with group activities today, because you'll be able to get more done that way. In fact, working in cooperation with others could bring pleasant changes or improvements to work.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You are so ambitious today! Be careful not to be suspicious of others, because the energy flowing to support herself others is well to yourself.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Don't get into your soapbox today to voices others to agree with your views today. And be aware of others who might try to persuade you to agree with them.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Concepts Sudoku — By Mel Odom

	2			1	4		3	
8			5		7			2
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Difficulty Level ★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Cow pasture
5 Hi-fi, e.g.
10 Involved in entanglement
14 Leaning tower
15 Bible
16 Wrath-of-Apollo poem
17 Tear; with "into" like another
18 Pirate
19 Vending-machine time
20 Ship's record
21 Screwdriving tool
23 Pitch's decisions: Abbr.
24 Pitch's statistics
25 Bullfight bellow
26 Stealthy
27 Useful rope
29 Tolerate
31 Ancient astronomers
33 Editorial "we"
34 Make jolly
36 Solo
37 Lariat
38 Nonsupervision: Abb.
40 Black, to Yo
41 Revealing
42 Tiny bite
43 Tedium
46 Draft board: Abbr.
47 Hair- and Pandora's
50 Really busy
51 Shoot
52 Sandwiches
53 Lawn-mowing
54 Tax-collecting agent
55 Tax-collecting agent
56 Tax-collecting agent
57 Tax
58 Citizen Kane's

DOWN

1 Hallucinogenic drug
2 Apartment complexes
3 Bird's beak
4 Bird's digestive
5 Pitcher's delivery
6 Pitcher's pace
7 Pitcher's pitch
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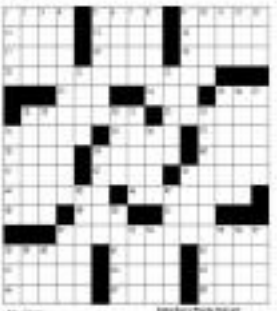

Solve Sun's Puzzle Online

Lightning in a bottle

It's like asking for the key to the kingdom, the formula that will open up a vault of dazzling secrets

WITH ALL of the talent-discovery talk constantly running on the TV screen, it's no surprise that some readers have asked me the P64,000 question: "What is the 'X Factor' that talent scouts keep talking about?"

This reminds me of the time when, still a rare in the TV-movie game, I asked my host Mike producer, "Mike Enrico, how do you come up with a movie title?"

Ang Tessang Enrico reacted to my naive and clueless question by laughing out loud: "Ay naku, hija, if I knew the answer to that question, bilyonaryo na sana ako!"

That's it. Like my smug and naive query the "What is the 'X Factor'?" question makes them by veteran laugh because it's like asking for the key to the kingdom, the yet real vetoed formula that will open up a vault of dazzling and priceless secrets, if only it can be found.

It's like trying to catch lightning in a bottle—it'll burn you in a crap first. Or, you can't try to do it with a hundred bottles, but what if they refuse to cooperate and leave you in the dark?

Quicksilver

Having said which, I should say that, it is possible. If you humble yourself and not blithely and crudely ask For the key to the kingdom, to refer to an appreciation of what that potent "X factor" is all about.

It's a quicksilver amalgam, a coy and devious combination of beauty, talent, personality appeal, charisma, unique selling factor, savvy and operating psychological creation and manipulation of viewers' needs and wants, actors, viewers' aspirations and the "panicome" quotient—all wrapped up possibly magic mumbo jumbo or daddy sometimes (otherwise) helps!

Clueless

What doesn't help is the smug and clueless answer that, if you come up with most or all of these attributes or plus points on your list, you the chosen (winner).

Many a well-heeled reader has tried to make it on short listing and push and pull, we asked up on an instant hits forms, or server wrist!

Faulty logic

Over and above the unerring efficiency of a well-oiled mass-making campaign, the talent being built up has to have "something special" that will enable him or her to "connect" with the members of the viewing public in emotional and even subliminal way. This goes beyond charisma or even empathy.

Some people think that a sad "back story" or romantic experience helps, which is why you have so many contestants on talent discovery shin weeping and wailing about their sad to tells.

The logic goes this way: Many have sob good, so they can relate more to the similarly impoverished starlet and come to take him in their arms and comfort him with their patronage and admiration.

But this play can backfiring on the "poor" starlet when it's obviously faked.

And it doesn't explain the extremely popularity, courtesy of their hits with a silver spoon in their mouths, like Sharon Cuneta.

Obviously the has another dynamic working for her—like the "patience" factor that many female teens and twenty-fourish?

What about the talk of the stellar spectacular...what is the "X factor" working in their favor? Our teen's look at another movie shows, so we're back to square one.

Tell all the Tyd, retard and bored readers out there, listen kid!

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NEWPORT CINEMAS
1 The Possession
Total Recall
2 The Campaign
3 Katy Perry: Part of Me 3D
I Do Bidoo Bidoo 2D
4 Abduction
FESTIVAL CINEMAS
1 Abduction
Total Recall in 2D
2 The Expendables 2D
3 I Do Bidoo Bidoo
4 The Possession
5 The Campaign
Katy Perry: Part of Me 3D
6 Total Recall in 2D
7 The Bourne Legacy
The Expendables
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What keeps this world traveler going

ANITA with Regine Tolentino

By Jodet A. Agustin

MUMBAI BORN and Singapore-raised travel host/writer Anita Kapur loves her job because, she says, it connects people.

Coming from what the two so partial to each—India and Singapore—and being an experienced traveler, she has probably seen it all. But she says many things still shock her. "Only," she quips, "I receive very late."

In a posted video interview, Kapur once said that people became jaded when they didn't hear a sense of belonging, so when things passed Inside Out Travel, the pointed out, bridged the gap.

"Being interested in things that are wrong keeps me going; that keeps me young and active," she tells Inquirer.

Kapur's love for travel was the result of her parents' moving from Mumbai to Singapore. She explains: "Many people from all parts of the world come to both places to make their fortune. Mumbai gave my life a start. Singapore exposed me to the entire world."

In 2003, she won the Discovery Travel and Adventure Writer Award's trip to Singapore host. The lucky many hosting stints, including "Street Singapore."

In 2004, she became deputy editor of Kapur's Bazaar Singapore and started her independent journalism career.

Among the places she has visited as host of the shows "Lonely Planet Snowbasers," "Farrell with Anita Kapur," "Asia Escapades" and "Ultimate Escape" are China, Kota Kinabalu, Tanzania, Hong Kong and Spain.

As host of TLC's new travel show "Go with with Anita Kapur," she gets to explore many diverse Asian cultures and changing lifestyles. Her destinations include Mumbai (part of a homecoming), Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Manila.

She notes that Manila's "most striking feature" are its people and their faith. She elaborates: "It's interesting how the people accept faith healing. I think it's like in church one the tribal cultures as well." In the end she concludes that the "Go Asia" feature on Manila "just touched the tip of the iceberg. I want to learn more."

Specifically, she wishes to discover "hidden pleasures" not usually experienced by regular tourists.

Kapur also wants us see beyond the stereotypical global image of Filipinos as domestic helpers and entertainers.

She says Filipinos are naturally entertaining, charismatic and talented, but feels "there are many more layers to the country that are likewise worth telling."

A compelling factor for her, Kapur says, is meeting "great representatives" of a country. Embarking on adventures, she starts by doing lots of research and finding the right contacts.

In her traveling bags are clothes that are both functional and stylish, and easily mixed and matched. Four pairs of footwear, a travel adapter and an iPod are among her other basic requirements.

Her dream destination is definitely Antarctica. "I would also love to see Serengeti (in Tanzania)."

"Go Asia with Anita Kapur" airs on TLC (Mondays at 8 p.m. starting tonight).

* * *

'Life's Too Short'

From Ricky Gervais and Stephen Merchant, "Life's Too Short" is a faux documentary starring Warwick Davis ("Willow," the "Harry Potter" and "Star Wars" films) as a fictionalized version of himself. A person down on his luck, desperately trying to hustle and reunite his estranged wife and son.

Each episode features cameos by top Hollywood stars including Johnny Depp, Liam Neeson, Ricky, Helena Bonham Carter, Steve Carell and Ian Dooley.

It premieres tonight at 10 p.m. exclusively on HBO, and 9 p.m. on HBO HD. Repeat episodes air weekly in the same time slots.

"LIFE'S Too Short"

"DEVILS Ride"

HUNDY de la Rama

'The Devils Ride'

For the first time this month, Discovery Channel goes inside the world of motorcycle clubs with the members of Gun Dargo's Lufflug Devils in its new series, "The Devils Ride."

Led by their president, Gipsy, the club members prove their commitment in spite of the internal conflicts and challenges that they all face.

The series airs Thursdays at 11 p.m. starting Sept. 13 on Discovery.

'Unchained Reaction'

Teams harness ingenuity, innovation and know-how to build contraptions on a massive scale.

The show premieres Sept. 14 at 10 p.m. also on Discovery.

'Follow'

Find out the latest buzz and newest trends in the lifestyle scene in the metropolis with "Follow," hosted by comedienne-host Jessica Mauboy de la Rama-Santos.

"Follow" airs on Solar Entertainment's *2nd Avenue channel, Mondays through Thursdays, 8 and 8 p.m., and Tuesdays through Fridays, 6 a.m. and 2 p.m.*

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Consistency is key to success of Pinoy achievers

For an acclaimed director, a multi-awarded hip-hop dance group, and a top-notch dragon boat team — whose constant achievements continue to give pride to the country — consistency is the key ingredient that keeps them at the top.

Chris Martinez

Multi-awarded director and screenwriter

"I always try to push further, to be bold and innovative, one thing my mom and the present teacher in the Filipino."

Philippine All-Stars

World Hip-Hop winner of 2008 and 2009 World Hip-Hop Dance Championships

"More than maintaining a high level of energy in our performances, what's more important is to keep the same level of discipline and passion for our craft."

Philippine Dragon Boat Federation

World-class dragon boat racing team

"Every dragon boat team needs constant teamwork and proper coordination. Here, everybody is equal and each member needs to move as a well-orchestrated body to propel the boat in one direction. Thus, being part of the team's attributes not only discipline but also camaraderie among its members."

When it comes to getting that fill of a delightfully satisfying meal, these achievers all agree that the consistently tender and juicy Jollibee Grilled Pork Tenders is the perfect answer to their grilled pork cravings. For only P99*, the Jollibee Grilled Pork Tenders Super Value Meal complete with rice, regular-sized Medium iced Tea and a bowl of Creamy Mushroom Soup is the affordable and filling way to reward everyday triumphs.

*Prices may vary in selected stores.

ENTERTAINMENT

Living Stars

Like Cinelle G. Ndarde

E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

DIANCA Sobrio on Twitter: "Just cuz someone is a model doesn't mean they're dumb. Likewise, just cuz you aren't, means you're smart" (Uh, something making here.)

HEARD

Due to popular online demand, we've extended the availability of Twister fries to September 10!

GETTING READY FOR THE "BER" MONTHS

PHILIPPINES – The traffic jams, the mall-wide sales, and the long lines to the cashier. It's official. The "ber" months or the start of the holiday

TIP 1: Stay warm – This is the only time you won't be judged a "weirdo" for wearing those thick, furry jackets! Take advantage of the chilly climate.

Manila's new heartthrob a doting grandson

JOHANNESBURG, South African lead actor in the current hit production of "The Phantom of the Opera" at the Cultural Center of the Philippines... and Manila's latest heartthrob as fans the Phantom... dedicates his every per-

formance to his doting grandparents Didi and Papa, because stayed into his closing years in relationships earlier this year and found among the reasons that included fan mail, French roses and presence, a teddy bear that

Johann Kapfelberger (company manager for the South African production) stood and was a gift from Papa.

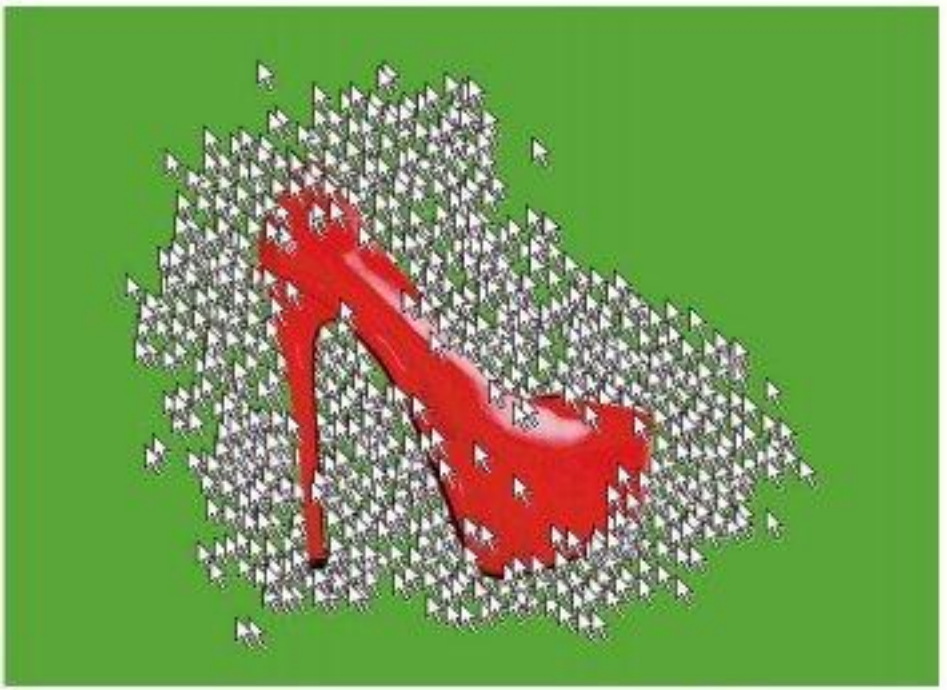
Jonathan is a closing star to the crew as well. Thank-indeed to a balloon board was a letter from him that said: "To Our Crew (The Greatness!). You guys are our guardian angels at this production. Your hardworking work, that often happens (and could go unnoticed) is so appreciated and missed. I shudder to think what we would do without you all. From those high above the stage to those of you hiding all around the wings, performance after performance, you are such invaluable assets to this show" (Inquirer, Manila)

HIS dressing room at Teatrino in Johannesburg, where "Phantom" production ongoing at the CCP until Sept. 30 was staged before it came to the Philippines.

TEDDY bear behind surprise are in a giant hug gift from grandpa.

FREEDOM snaps among handwritten notes from fans of all ages.

BOOMBOX! It's music the media in Manila.



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PALAWAN

SHE WORKS hard and rewards herself with designer bags.

HOT SO much zero makeup. Ruby pairs pin cocktails, lip color and mascara on ordinary days.

Whatever Ruby wants...

SHE RAVED up for this sexy pair of heels from Aquazzura.

TURQUOISE leather pouch by Hermes

Fernandez

adored. "Heels were not at [illegible] loved. I started wearing this when I was already [illegible] graduate. Nosotros ako," she admitted.

Her most treasured pairs were bought in Sydney. "I saved my school allowances to buy them," said Ruby, showing two pairs of leather heels from [illegible]. "I call them cool-cha heels; they're very sexy."

Cosmetics

The actress relies on artist Bandai for makeup. "Any day my face relies on my makeup artist is not around. She used to use the family beauty salon in Makati, for powder, I use Mac. For eye shadow, I turn to Dermot and Maybelline. I wear mineral lip colors, but the pink and beige from Tiffs women are my favorites."

Ruby admits: "I recently received a new smaller makeup bag from my mom, who bought it from Bayo. I can't bring the old one to meetings and tapings because it's too heavy. On ordinary days, I wear only a blush, lip color and mascara."

Accessories

The actress, who's not keen on accessories, keeps a collection of expensive watches instead. "The Gucci wristwatch is a gift from my dad. I bought this gold-and-silver Cartier with the money I won and I was paid for a modeling job in Sydney."

Ruby brought out an expensive-looking watch box, luxury wear manufacturers by Hermes, Louis Vuitton, Rolex, Christian Dior and Chanel. "Mom keeps them locked up in her room. We don't always see them," she said. "We consider them investments."

E-mail [illegible]

SHE SWEARS she's not a techie but owns a couple of expensive gadgets, like the MacBook Pro and BlackBerry Torch.

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2: THE CAMPAIGN

GREENBELT 2

1: THE CAMPAIGN
2: KATY PERRY: PART OF ME (3D)
3: POSSESSION
4: TOTAL RECALL
5: THE EXPENDABLES 2

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

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2: KATY PERRY: PART OF ME (3D)
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4: THE EXPENDABLES 2
5: TOTAL RECALL

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3: POSSESSION
4: AMORSOLO

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2: THE EXPENDABLES 2
3: THE CAMPAIGN
4: AMORSOLO

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1: TOTAL RECALL (3D)
2: POSSESSION
3: THE CAMPAIGN
4: KATY PERRY: PART OF ME
5: I DO BIDOO BIDOO
6: AMORSOLO
7: RESERVED

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2: I DO BIDOO BIDOO
3: POSSESSION
4: KATY PERRY: PART OF ME (3D)
5: THE EXPENDABLES 2
6: AMORSOLO
7: THE CAMPAIGN

ABREEZA

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Whatever Ruby wants

...she doesn't always get; model-actress has learned to save money, buys only the essentials

SHE FIRST wore this to try to get credit-driven for a banning job.

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Quiao/Pasajian

MODEL-ACTRESS Ruby Cayetano admires the girls up a spoiled brat, getting all that she wanted without working for them. Things changed when she turned 20 and started making money on her own.

"My mom told me, 'You have to earn your keep.' She stopped giving me expensive gifts and urged me to help in the family business. Before then, it was either my mom that she went on errands for or me," Ruby, now 22, told Living Stars during a recent visit to her condo unit in Mandaluyong.

Ruby's mom Josie and sister Natalie run a clothing business called Mixedgoy, which has a store at Rockwell. It is Makati. As she could help, Ruby took a short course in Fashion Design at the School of Fashion and the Arts Phils. also in Makati. She continued her studies in Sydney, Australia, where her father is based.

"Since working as a model and actress, I've realized how hard it is to earn money," Ruby said. "I've stopped being brats and learned to buy only things that I need."

Ruby plays the lead role in the Jessie Javier-produced indie film "Hindi Ito, Hindi Iyon," where she gets to work with actors Orlando Sol and Val Sotto. She is also in the cast of "Amnesia" by Topper Lee and "Kapatiran" by Erik Matti.

Her next airtime is on ABC-5's in the game show "Deal or No Deal" on 9:55 p.m.

Clothes

Ruby used to be indecisive about accessorizing outfits. "I got that from when I hosted a show for the online music channel Flipside.com. That is memorable to me. I don't want to wear the same shoes elsewhere." This is a beige mini dress with lace.

"This is special, too," Ruby said of a pink floral bustier-dress with shrinkable sleeves. "I wore it in my first indie movie. I don't want to let this go. I splurged elsewhere in it."

She likes the feel of corset bustier, she said. "So I bought this floral mini-dress in Sydney. It's from Asian and Americana, even if it's from Bench."

Secrets

Ruby is into scents, floral and fruity scent. "My current favorite is Mexican. One spray [and] the whole night—like Britney Spears and Island Music," she said. "I also like Prada, which I discovered through a friend. Issey Miyake, Bulgari, Versace Versus and Lolita by Marc Jacobs are also good."

Gadgets

She won't admit such a noble, but the young actress owns a number of expensive gadgets. "My younger [brother] Jacobed advised me to get the MacBook Pro," she revealed. "As for this Acer Iconia[-]laptop, I've had it since 2010. My mom bought it because I needed it to school."

Ruby continued: "This iPhone 4 was a birthday gift from my mom and my ex-boyfriend in 2011. They bought it while we were traveling in Perth. I actually begged them to. Mom got me the Blackberry Torch as leftovers."

Ruby said the Nintendo DS (game console) helped her cope with homesickness in Sydney. "I played with it during down time. I really saved up for this," she explained. "The digital SLR camera (Canon EOS 550D) was a gift from my dad. I love taking pictures! I brought this with me when the family moved from and lived recently."

Bags

Ruby has been using designer bags since junior high. "I got my first Louis Vuitton on my 18th birthday. Mom bought me another when I turned 21," she recalled. "I never use the one [a] doctor's bag created by Kris Aquino. I inked my name in gold to the zipper. I had saved and bought it myself, too."

She also has bags by Prada and Hermes, for special occasions. "They're small, meant for parties. But I do have my all-carryall that I bring everywhere."

Shoes

"My favorite is a pair of studded Jimmy Choo high heels. Mom and [friends] picked it. It goes with any outfit. I often wear it with a matching Jimmy Choo bag," she said.

THE DIGITAL SLR camera (Canon EOS 550D) is a gift from dad.

SHE'S into scents that are sweet, floral and fruity.

HER MATCHING Louis Vuitton purse, wallet and belt.

THE [watching watch has contains sunglasses from Hermes, Louis Vuitton, Balos, Christian Dior and Chanel.

RUBY admits high-heeled shoes and body-sexy wearing shoes.

Ruby still keeps a pair of black leather heels from Mango that she wears in high

Eureka's tribute to Jessie Robredo/ G3

CEAP renews education commitment/ G4

Edna Chole Bona-Formoso

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EARTH HEALERS

72,000 young readers, their parents and teachers. The new story re-chapters by Gym Abad-Jugo special-ly written for the Bench-DK Social Reading Program will come out on Sept. 18.

San Beda College founding principle 'bans' fraternities

By Linda B. Bolido

WHEN San Beda College (SBC) announced, following the recent death of freshman law student Mark Andre Marcos, that it did not allow fraternities—and sororities, for that matter—people thought it was an overreaction, a panicked, impractical, unwarranted response to a serious problem.

Marcos was the second SBC law student to die this year as a result of hazing, a violent fraternal culture aspiring members are subjected to extreme physical abuse by so-called masters.

Earlier this year, Marvin Reglos, also an SBC law freshman, succumbed to injuries sustained from hazing.

But SBC's ban on Greek letter organizations is not a reaction to the tragic incidents or even the existing antihazing law.

Dr. Joffre Alajar, chair of the accountancy department and assistant vice dean for accountancy business classes and legal management, explains that the ban has been in effect since SBC's founding.

It is rooted on Chapter 65 of "The Rule of St. Benedict." The patron saint of Europe and students, of course, the founder of the Benedictine Order of monks that operates the SBC.

Technically, the chapter provides a guideline for the organization of the Benedictine Order. But it also guides the running of Benedictine schools.

This rule, Alajar says, discourages anything that may lead to "envy, discord, slander, quarrels, jealousy and disorders." Feats and scrambles are likely sources of those things.

FORMERLY an all-boys' school, SBC became coed in 2002, Alajar (right) says.

Besides, Alajar points out, SBC started as an exclusive boys school and as such was already some kind of fraternity. It was only in 2002 that the whole college became coeducational, although the College of Law became coed much earlier.

Clear policy

Alajar says, following the recent incidents, the school has taken steps to remind students of the principle on which the school was founded. The student handbook has been revised, the changes effective immediately. "to provide for a clear policy on student organizations."

The school will do more than just give out the handbooks. Since victims of frat violence are mainly freshmen, Alajar says, "during interviews with our students, the guidance counselor and administrative officers would [explain to them] the policy ... regarding frats and related matters."

In fact, during the last orientations, the science department showed a video of violent initiation rites, no doubt prompted by the Reglos incident. Alajar says he does not know how they managed to get the video.

Students, other than members of the orientation committee, will be prohibited from interacting with incoming freshmen or "it is usually during this time that [sic] recruit members," says Alajar.

Reminders, waivers

Reminders about nonrecognition of frats will be posted in different parts of the school and students will be asked to sign waivers that state they will not join frats, only recognized orchestra, cultural and other organizations of the same kind.

Signing the waiver means they will be willing to face the consequences, including expulsion, for any infraction.

Alajar says that, for the undergraduates, especially the new students, they will even require the parents to sign.

However, he points out that most frats are the law school where the students are older and supposed to already be discerning adults who do not need as much personal supervision as the others.

From the first day Alajar says the school will note in strategical areas that it does not recognize frats, much less condone hazing. Students will be asked to list down the organizations they plan to join.

Alajar believes any impression that the school is sweeping the

MORE STORY, G2

National Teachers' Month

Calendar of activities, events, treats and services

IT IS that time of the year again to show some appreciation for the many things classroom teachers do. For our dear teachers, here is a list of awards, seminars, workshops, exercises as well as free services and treats to celebrate National Teachers' Month, which begins on Sept. 5 and ends on World Teachers' Day, Oct. 5.

Is your organization, institution, business or group doing a tribute to teachers this month? E-mail a short press release to learning@inquirer.com.ph.

Sept. 5

Launch of the 2012 NTM during the Awarding of Metrobank Outstanding Filipinos, Shangri-La Hotel Makati, 11 a.m. (Metrobank Foundation)

Sept. 6

Global Filipino Teachers Program Graduation (Coalition for Better Education with Globe Telecom)

Sept. 8, 15, 22, 29, Oct. 6

Teachers Enhance Access to Care and Health eBikes (TEACHER) - Health services and wellness lectures for public school teachers at Manila at Manila Doctors Hospital Outpatient Department (DPD)

Sept. 10

Science Quizzicards Quiz Bee Contest for high school students and teacher mentors, 10 a.m.–12 m at SM Bacoor (St. Dominic College of Asia)

Search for Mr. and Ms NTM Ambassador - 2012 Talent Show, 2 p.m.–6 p.m. at SM Bacoor (St. Dominic College of Asia)

Sept. 12-16

Visit Manila International Book Fair, 10 a.m.–6 p.m. at SMX Convention Center

Share Teachers' Day, MSF 1001 Center (Iloilo-Ribbed Foundation)

Sept. 14

Audiobuilder's Forum on PWU's University Research Agenda, 8 a.m.–12 m at the Ahmad Hall, Centennial Museum Bldg. (Philippine Normal University)

Sept. 15

MAGIC NTM Art Exploration Lecture - A series of workshops and talks focusing on art and wellness, Le Pavilion, Pasay City, 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. (Metrobank Foundation)

Picking of raffle winners (Manos Unidos)

Lessons Learned from our Heroes - Seminar conducted by Andrew Champa, 8 a.m.–12 m at SMX Convention Center (Ateneo Professional Schools)

Sept. 17

Gratitude Wall for Teachers (Philippine Military Academy)

CALENDAR G3

Playgrounds for the MIND

Cop Editor Chayrie Medina

Letran studies engage Japanese counterparts through video

FIFTH grade students of Colegio de San Juan de Letran's basic education department engaged Japanese fifth grade students from Minamidai Elementary School in Kawachinagano City, Osaka, Japan through a series of videoconferences in July.

Using 3Q Conference technology students initially introduced themselves to one another before proceeding to talk about their hobbies and interests. The Letran students would talk to their Japanese counterparts in Nihongo while the Japanese students would converse in English. Adjustments in the equipment used also contributed to the better success of interaction in the subsequent videoconferencing sessions.

"We would also like our students to experience the wonder of technology as well as further discussions about each other's countries, specifically as regards to the Japanese students why it's more fun in the Philippines," said basic education department principal Asst. Prof. Shilpa dela Cruz.

The videoconference program was borne out of a cultural exchange program between the Kawachinagano International Friendship Association and Colegio de San Juan de Letran.

In May, a delegation of administrators, faculty, and students led by Letran executive vice president Rev. Fr. Napoleon Encarnacion, OP, and vice president for external affairs Rev. Fr. Jose Perez, OP, visited Kawachinagano City Shoji Umeda, administrator of the Kawachinagano Educational Media Center, wrote to Rivera after the trip and suggested the possibility of exchanging lessons via a TV conferencing system.

PH tops Google challenge in Asia-Pacific

THREE entrepreneur graduates of the University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) competed against 2,000 contestants from 86 countries and took first honors in the Asia-Pacific region at the recent Google Online Marketing Competition (GOMC), an annual event for university students to experience marketing first hand.

The winning team of alumni Hannah Tan and Emma Lee, and current master's degree student Ryan Santos, trained and implemented a Google Adwords marketing campaign for Citrus & Web, a limited-edition clothing shop co-founded by Cora Co, a UA&P alumna. As part of their prize, Tan, Lee, and Santos will tour the Google headquarters in Singapore next month.

Teresa-Jewels Rabell Gruss, an entrepreneur who teaches part-time at the university, also formed a UA&P team that landed a spot in the global top 30 rankings of the same competition last year. Gruss believes that the Philippines has a huge potential in online marketing, as more are keen about the competition is worldwide.

To compete in the Google Online Marketing Challenge, contestants run a three-week campaign for a small or medium enterprise or an NGO taking the online advertising platform Google Adwords. Google gives each qualified team a $250 Adwords credit. Winners are then chosen on the basis of campaign performance and the quality of their reports.

HONOR ROLL

UE alumna an outstanding N&D student

PHILIPPINE Association of Nutrition, Inc. (PAN) conferred on UE alumna Jennie Mae D. Villanueva the Outstanding Nutrition and Dietetics Students for 2012 award during PAN's 60th Annual Convention at the Quad Hotel in Makati City last July 18. Villaverde graduated from the UE College of Education, cum laude, with the BS Nutrition and Dietetics in April 2012. She was accompanied by UE NE professors Geraldene M. Magbuling, Vanessa L. Di Mare and Mary Ann E. Bacatanga at the ceremony. For inquiries about the UE College of Education, visit the Dean's Office, 2/F Education Bldg. or call tel. nos. 735-1417 local 284 or 285 or 736-0574, or visit the UE web site, ing.ue, www.ue.edu.ph.

Faith bags medals in Math Olympiad

EIGHTH-graders of Faith Christian School of Tarlac, Batangas bagged medals in the Asia International Math Olympiad (AIMO) held in Hong Kong last July 29 to Aug. 1. High-school students Flavis Mae C. Andaya (third year) and Engelica S. Perez (second year) brought home silver and bronze medals, respectively. More than two thousand young Math wizards joined the prestigious international competition. This is the second time for FAITH to bring home an international award. The school made the headlines in 2008 when its high school students took home the gold medal for the Philippines in the World Robot Olympiad held in Beijing, China.

NDGM Math talents shine

AT THE King of Mathematics Competition held in Hongkong on July 23-24, the delegates of Notre Dame of Greater Manila Sam Rebuh Reinrey Valdecantos of Grade III - 10, Luke Isaro a gold medalist while Matthew Raphael Abenoja VI - St. Eugene obtained the bronze medal. Meanwhile, on July 25-27, at the 9th Asia Cup Stars of the Olympic Math Contest in Hongkong, Valdecantos won most awarded and Abenoja got the silver medal. Bronze medals were awarded to Jose Miguel Micallo III - St. Patrick and Seth Gabriel Picaltori of III - St. Eugene. These four boys competed with other grade school pupils from other countries in Asia. Karl Raymond Bogoc of II - St. Alphonsus and Colin Belel Rosales of III - St. Luke were representatives at the International Mathematics Competition in Singapore on Aug. 3-6 and were awarded a merit award and a bronze medal, respectively. The pupils were accompanied by their Math teachers Gina E. Estrichal and Dominey B. Legal.

BRIEFS

PMA cadets attend leadership conference

TEN PMA cadets, composed of five First Class and five Second Class attended the Pathways to Leadership, 6th Young Leaders' Conference, Said conference/Conference was a collaboration between the Magsaysay Center of UMAK Foundation and the Far Eastern University with the purpose to gather, unify, mold and organize men and women with the vision, character, commitment and ability into a new breed of leaders to build the nation. Select youth leaders who have given significant contributions to the society are gathered in the conference where they were given activities to learn and understand various models of leadership and to validate the effectiveness of certain leaders.

2nd TESOL seminar-workshop Sept. 1 and 2

THE 7th CDNE International TESOL Seminar-Workshop Series 2012 will be held on Sept. 1 and 2 at Mahogany Court, SM Village, Silliman, Dumaguete City. Theme is "English Language in 3D: Borrower, Diversified, Developmental." Featured speakers and their topics are: Perl Blanc Holgrave ("Teaching the Macro Skills: 3 Ds in Grammar Teaching, Extensive Reading, and The Science of Happiness in the ESL Classroom); Dr. Paul Robertson (Second Language Acquisitions, Br. Positive Online (Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education), and Dr. Bias Lo ("The Effects of Cooperative Learning Elements and English for Specific Purposes). Nathan Emmel will deliver a workshop on Neuro-linguistics and English for Specific Purposes. Deadline for reservations is Aug. 10. Registration fee is P3,000 inclusive of hand-outs, snacks, lunch, honorarium for lecturers, trainers and support staff, venue and certification with the prefix/prefix Asian EFL Journal seal. For registration or information, please contact Pearl Sandra at 921-6387 loc. 222; (0918) 639-6886 or pearlgalvez.ne@gmail.com, Ron-Dale Gascon at 933-021-94300 or gascon_ron@yahoo.com; Nina Tangcora at 301-4987 loc. 268; or Rexyrose Bona at (0927) 473-7553, wwwsmalltownpli.ph or pbona@yahoo.com; or dianbajenas@yahoo.com.

UP digital links up with Smart

SMART Communications, Inc. (Smart) is providing Wi-Fi connectivity and access points to support the transformation journey of the University of the Philippines (UP), to be operational by January. Smart would help UP link all of its eight units, including the Open University, and help streamline the administrative processes across the system. The computerization of UP, dubbed the eUP Project, is a key initiative under UP's Strategic Plan from 2011-2031 with the ultimate goal of making UP more competitive in the region as a national university. It would support a digital ecology from the government of almost P752 million up to 20 05. The project is soon completed by 2013. With completion, UP students can enroll, pay, apply for admission and scholarship, view grades, submit requirements and interact with teachers and fellow students online. Members of the faculty will have easier access to tailored research data. UP alumni can also request for their records online and have these processed fast.

SPU Manila holds forum on Paulinian heritage

AS PART of the St. Paul Manila centennial celebration (1912-2012), a forum on Paulinian heritage was held last Aug. 17 at the Fleur-de-lis Theater, St. Lila Pavilion L. Tolentino, SPC, SPU Manila president, gave the opening remarks. Sr. Lilia is an alumna (HS 1960, BM 1964). Special guests were lawyer Benita Macalagan Gardiola (HS 1 8[illegible]), a Cardiac Clinical cardiologist and lawyer Agnes Torres-Devanadera (HS 1966, BSE 1970), former Secretary of Justice. Members of the forum panel were Sherry Lara Alinsod (HS 1988, AB 1993), and president of the St. Paul Manila Alumni Foundation, Inc. Lara Montevirgen Doonan-Martinez (HS 1984, AB-MSC 1988, and SPU Manila alumni relations officer).

LBDT takes third place in Sabah folklore fest

LAKING Batangan Dance Troupe (LBDT), the nationally and internationally acclaimed premiere folk dance group of the Philippines University of Batangas (UPB), bested 40 folkloric dance (Cultural Minister Awardee) in the 7th Sabah International Folklore Festival (SIFF) held July 9 to 17 in Sabah, Malaysia. LBDT, a duly accredited proponent of the National Commission for the Culture and Arts (NCCA) and a Dangal ng Pilipinas Hall of Famer, served as the official Philippine representation. SIFF showcases rich heritages of countries by encouraging participation of dance troupes.

CAMPUS SPORTS

FEATI wins first game at ISAA

IT WAS a close pull-something fight between the male cagers of Philippine Women's University and FEATI University Soaheads but the latter led the way to a victorious finish at the opening games of the 60-Inter-Scholastic Athletic Association (ISAA) held at the PSDS Flying V Arena in San Juan last Aug. 15. In the coming weeks, ISAA member schools will also compete in volleyball, swimming, and badminton. ISAA is composed of FEATI University, La Consolacion College Manila, Lyceum of the Philippines University, Manila Adventist Medical Center and Colleges, Manila Tytana Colleges, Philippine Women's University, St. Dominic College of Asia, Technological Institute of the Philippines, and Philippine Merchant Marine School.

Member Schools

Jesse Robredo: A passion to serve

I NEVER talked to Jesse Robredo. When he delivered the commencement address at Ateneo de Manila University in March 2003, I wanted to shake his hand. But I was too shy to approach him, so my desired regret. But I will always remember his speech.

Robredo passionately wanted to serve, "mesmerizing Naga's youngest mayor at age 29. He told the 2003 graduates, "If we cannot do it at the national level, there are still heights at the local level ... you might be a matter of leading from the but sure rather than being herded by the top."

Governance is neither for the weak-willed nor the proud. Unlike most leaders who become disoriented in his abrupt sight, Robredo "understood that we did not have the monopoly of wisdom ... We should know when to lead and when to be led."

How did Robredo (variously Naga from a third-class local government unit into a premier city? Much has been said about his governance style, but the answer primarily is people power.

Robredo knew he needed the people to be behind him and working beside him. To earn their trust, his team "tackled long-standing problems (such as) thin, urban blight, red tape, graft and corruption, and poor tax collection."

They worked with all sectors, including "network vendors, drivers, urban poor, farmers, professional and business circles, nongovernment organizations and religious groups." Through such initiatives as On People Empowerment Ordinance, Citizen's Charter and People's Council, Robredo addressed his constituents directly and empowered them "not just to know but also to engage (in government."

Before online media became popular, Robredo had already mastered that the city's website, naga.gov.ph, did not only report statistics, but also "promoted transparency and accountability."

Robredo said, "Because of transparent governance and accessibility of information, unscrupulous suppliers and contractors of supplies and medicines cast much less in Naga City than government standards."

To succeed, the Philippines has to make ordinary people heroes

Quarente S. Tan-Chua

Schools and scholarships

In 1999, my friend, fearless blogger Pinoy Kuwait, introduced Robredo to homework magazine, citing among his accomplishments the opening of 80 public preschools and four high schools and the grant of 700 college scholarships for poor but deserving students.

Robredo worked with education leaders, such as former Ateneo de Naga head Fr. Raul Bonoan, S.J., who insisted that "education is (that) must be for (the) development." I often quote that to my students, especially when they ask for recommendations letters to schools or jobs overseas.

In Naga, Robles said, Robredo "opened the Institute for Local Government Administration and the Center for Community Development ... which kinds money to poor women ... (and) persuaded neighboring villages to offer courses like volunteering, nursing and geodetic engineering."

Ordinary heroes

Robredo told the lessons graduates, "Many of you will be leaders of our country, someday or may even become President ... But it is not items that make many of our leaders great. It is not in achieving their personal goals. He (she) can his legged behind? Maybe it is because they have failed to make heroes out of the ordinary Filipino. Maybe it is because they have willed solely on their own capabilities, rather than on the contributions of the ordinary people they are responsible for.

"The world today lacks the values that positive mold the disposition and the character of the ordinary citizen," Robredo said. "The world today, despite the advances in science and technology, has yet to learn about how to live, what to do, and how to be."

Growing heroes was a good thing, Robredo said, but he wanted to focus on the regular student. Uncomfortable with accolades most of his life, Robredo knew that the task of building this country was too important to be left solely to those with rewards or recognition. He himself did not graduate with honors from De La Salle University in 1980.

"We have put the burden of running this country to our 'best' people for too long," Robredo said. "And yet the gap between the rich and the poor has grown/wider. For this country to succeed, we need to make heroes of the ordinary people ... We need to make heroes of ourselves."

Robredo told the tale of a woman street sweeper in Naga, "who held on to her broom for 20 years. Literally, she had swept every square inch of the city's hundred districts. But, through sheer determination, she was able to finish her secondary studies in a night school and graduated ... at 54, with a bachelor's degree, some eight years after her own daughters had theirs."

Once, Robredo asked some Grade 6 pupils of a public school in Pamplona, a municipality bordering on Naga, about what they wanted to be. "A boy said he wanted to be a doctor because there was no doctor in the barangay," he said. "A girl said she wanted to be a teacher so that she would make sure that all the children in her barangay would go to school." Another boy said he wanted to be an engineer so he could improve the roads and provide irrigation systems for the farmers.

"Like all of us, they too wanted to be somebody someday," he said. "Naga, despite the deprivations and difficulties, they were all for a noble purpose — to be of service to others. Not one of them said that it was for fame, money or power. They were so young, yet they knew what it means to their community and for others."

My condolences to the families of Jesse Robredo and the two pilots who died with him.

For the full text of Jesse Robredo's commencement speech, go to www.naga.gov.ph/wp-full/?attachment_id=1.

E-mail the author at thechoot @yahoo.com.

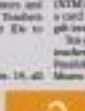
Free to teachers

Festival Supermalls

Discounts for teachers at the commissary stores and selected outlets. Teachers must present their IDs to avail of discounts.

Jollibee

From Oct. 1 to Oct. 19, all teachers will get a free vanilla sundae cone with every purchase of a 2-pc Chickenjoy value meal or 1-pc Chickenjoy value meal with Palabok value meal. The free treat may be availed of exclusively by teachers in any Jollibee store nationwide.



Manila Doctors Hospital

"Teachers Enhance Access to Care and Health Services" (Teaches)

Provision of free medical services to teachers that include: Voice and hearing screening, vision screening, cardio-pulmonary checkup, breast examination, gynecologic checkup, Sept. 6-Oct. 6, every Saturday only, 8:11 a.m. at Manila Doctors Hospital's Out-patient Department.

The Mind Museum

(Symbolic) Air Tendra (tax) P100 discounted rate for teachers all year round.

Music Pantheon

Free gift for teachers/teachers accompanying their students on a tour on National Teachers' Month (NTM) get to win by picking a card with a corresponding gift item.

Ten percent discount for teachers who shop in the Publishing Library on any Music Pantheon product.

Teacher Raffle: all teachers visiting the Ayala museum can sign their names and provide contact details to join the raffle (Aug. 15-Sept. 14). Five winners will be announced on Sept. 15.

Free admission all year round to all teachers.

Star Parks Corporation

Buy-one-take-one — Star City tickets for teachers for NTM.

Teachers who purchase one Star City Ride All-You-Can (ride) will be given another ticket for free. ID should be presented upon purchase of tickets. Offer is available Sept. 5-Oct. 5.

SM Supermalls

Teachers' special treats and freebies. To avail of promo, teachers need to present their valid school ID. For every purchase (e.g. SM8C department store).

Free consultant to Schools Discovery Center to teachers who are in active service and can show valid IDs.

Calendar of activities...

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Sept. 20

Thanksgiving Mass for My Teacher, My Hero, 9 a.m. at SM (FLEX Cinema)

Guests Inc. Grabit Mix, 1:30 p.m. at SM (FLEX Cinema)

Sept. 20-22

Education Leadership in the 21st Century Training. Training program on developing school leadership roadmaps for Misamis Occidental, Cebu City (Coalition for Basic Education with Microsoft)

Sept. 21

Team-building Seminar and Fellowship, 9 a.m. at SM (FLEX Cinema)

Sept. 21-22

6th Bamuingan Festival, National Museum's Jhanes National Commission of the Philippines)

Sept. 21

Troop Leader's Day - My Troop Leader, My True Leader (recognition ceremony for active troop leaders Girl Scouts of The Philippines)

1000 Teachers Program Roadshow - 8 recruitment program for the new scholarship program in SY 2013-2014. The road show will be held in differ ent locations in Cebu City (Philippine Business for Education)

Sept. 22-23

1000 Teachers Program

Fourth Information center of the 1000 Teachers Program, SM Cebu (Philippine Business for Education in partnership with the Department of Education's Go Ed project)

Sept. 27-29

NOTED National Tri-Level Conference of Teachers and Educators at Century Park Hotel Manila (Federation Fourth-Level Educators of Teachers and Educators)

Sept. 28

Film shooting, 9 p.m. at Resorts World Manila (FLEX Cinema)

Sept. 29

Storytelling workshop facilitated by Rodjie Pascua at Shangri-La Mactan, Cebu (Shangri-La Mactan Resort and Spa)

The Human Ball - Shangri-La Mactan's friendly (NGO, artists, dancers, storybook authors) may invite their teachers in Shangri-La Mactan for a special program to honor them (Shangri-La Mactan)

Using Technology for Multimedia Instruction, 8 a.m. - 12 noon at the conference started National Book Store (Super Network in Cubao (Jared Publications)

NOTED Convention evening affair at Century Park (Sheraton Hotel)

A Night of 1,000 at the Shangri-La. A fundraiser project for the 1000 Teachers Program, 6 p.m., National Museum (Philippine Business for Education, in collaboration with Lifestyle Asia and the Philippine National Museum)

Tribute to Teachers - 4-year-by-gathering of educators all over the Philippines, 5 p.m., Greenbelt Plaza (Ilaha Italiani - Wonderful with Olivia Learning Systems)

Sept. 30

Special interview and filming for teachers during Sunday Mass (Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines)

Thanksgiving Mass for teachers at selected Old Malls

Oct. 3, 4

Cosplay, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at SM Mall of Asia (St. Dominic Col. Inst. of Asia)

Social Dancing Contest for teachers and parents, 2 p.m.-6 p.m. at SM Mall of Asia (St. Dominic College of Asia)

Search for Mr Ambassadress and Ms. Ambassador of NTM 2012, 4-30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. at SM Mall of Asia (St. Dominic College of Asia)

Oct. 4

DepEd World Teachers' Day Parade, DepEd officials, students participants and guests in Cagayan de Oro City

Global Filipino Teachers Program graduation, 60 teachers will be awarded Certificates of Proficiency, Davao City (Coalition for Basic Education with Globe Telecom)

Oct. 5

DepEd World Teachers' Day Celebration at Limketkai Atrium, Cagayan de Oro City

Nationwide ringing of bells, 10 a.m.

Simultaneous recitation of the "National Prayer for Teachers" nationwide, 10:05 a.m.

Turnover of checks for national finalists of the 2012 Search for Outstanding Teachers (SOFT)

Teachers' Day w/ Dr. Celedonio Salvador Elementary School in Ilaya, Manila (Manila Doctors Hospital)

Globe's Time.com "Will Him Big Time" (FLEX Cinema), 8 p.m., TV5

Global Teachers' Day Celebration (Documentary by Lingayen ng Maynila)

Mass and recitation of prayer for teachers (Manila Tytana College)

Alumni pay tribute to their teachers (Manila Tytana College)

Prestige and Au Prestige (Manila Tytana College)

SBC founding principle 'bans' fraternities

From page B1

having issue under the rug

He reports that, although some of the 58 students implicated in the Baguio case were able to graduate as the incident happened at the end of school year 2011-12, the College of Law informed the Supreme Court that these were pending administrative cases against them for suspected membership in a fraternity.

Personally this will affect their chances of becoming bar, Bodgod lawyers.

Disqualified

The school also disqualified from enrollment and/or allowed the voluntary withdrawal from SBC of 16 other students.

The remaining 17 have denied membership in a fraternity. They are conditionally enrolled pending verification of their claims.

In the Sharon case, a committee of discipline started to look into the allegations of the administrative aspect of the case on Aug. 8. Any student proven guilty of violating the ban on fraternities will be expelled, he says.

Although alleged frat members were identified by recruits, Abajar admits the code of silence that governs the organizations is hampering their efforts in pinpointing those responsible for the recent incidents.

He added that the school is fully cooperating with law enforcers in the investigation.

Abajar says they are also battling on the conception of others across ... limiting the government (particularly the legislature) and alumni ... in enforcing the frat ban.

Realizing that many students, including faculty members, are frat members, most of them from the law school — he says the Law Alumni Association plans to hold a dialogue with alumni who are frat members to ask for their help in finding a solution to the problem of fraternities and hazing.

The SBC official, who has been with the school since he was a student, says the problem is nationwide in scope. "Frats seem to have a greater need to belong and (to have) the connections when it is time to find a job. (They are also told) when they join a frat, they will have access to pass exams (including bar exams) and they will have an edge in the job market."

Sense of belonging

He says, "We have to make them realize this is not true. They should look for a healthy sense of belonging (other than) enroll in the school and face them to identify themselves, a family."

At present, the school has a student population of about 7,000. According to university standards, but "an unwritten" in the Benedictine Fathers who founded the school, the ideal number is around 5,000.

The high number of students is one of the reasons why the school is unable to accommodate all applicants who pass the entrance exam, he says.

Abajar adds that SBC's outstanding performance in the annual bar examinations — 96.55 percent passing rate in 2011 — should be more than enough recommendation for its new law graduates. Almost every year an SBC bar graduate is among the top 10 bar examinees.

Abajar, who says the school does not tolerate any violence in and outside the campus, says they demand what an university founded on reverence for life, respect for diversity, rule of law and "fusing" that is in the facts of universal love service.

Toward this end, they are organizing dialogues with students, setting to parents to seek their cooperation in discouraging children from joining fraternities and sororities.

The team that he (the Benedictine Fathers who consider themselves shepherds and the students their flock. The victims of hazing were not just those who died and members of their family but also the people who caused them violence.

Registration for essay writing tilt ends Sept. 30

LAST DAY for registration for an on-the-spot essay writing contest on Philippine history and culture is Sept. 30.

The contest, which is open to high school and college students in both private and public schools, is organized by the Bloom Movement for Cultural Advancement Inc. (Blooming Kasumangpit), a nongovernmental organization that aims to preserve, foster and promote the Philippine culture.

The contest is in line with the Bloom Movement's advocacy campaign on "Kultura Ko! Yaman Ko!" to keep in mind awareness and appreciation of the richness of the Filipino culture.

Officers of the Bloom Movement include co-chairs Felipe M. de Leon Jr., chair; Visitacion "Chit" R. dela Rosa, president; Nilo Leo, secretary; Dr. Marina Rosal, treasurer; Jean-Rina Constancio of the Children's Art of the Philippines, artistic health; and directors and honorary members Roland Rotman, directors.

Call 4064430, 8126803 or 8134808, or e-mail mindalaw@yahoo.com.

Learn simple Japanese in 2 weeks

THE JAPAN Foundation Manila (JFM) will be conducting the course "Manapalit: Japanese Language and Culture" on Oct. 18-28 (12:30-2:30 p.m.).

The "Manapalit: Japanese Language and Culture" is for beginners and prior knowledge of the Japanese language. Communicative language activities are provided. They will allow the use of the language within the context of Japanese settings, such as eating out, visiting friends, etc. The course will enable learners to speak simple Japanese right away.

The tuition of P5,000 will cover two half-day workbooks and DVDs.

The "Manapalit" will be held at 23/F, Pacific Star Bldg., Makati Ave., Makati City. For more forms of the JFM Call 8116700 to 08 or e-mail consultfilipino.org.ph. Visit www.jfmo.org.ph.

Lessons on creativity from TEDx, grad school

By Cathrine Tsuyog
Contributor

AT THE SCHOOL of Visual Arts (SVA) in New York where I attended graduate school, I was notorious for sliding over the back room, where I would spend hours working on projects.

Occasionally, I would come out, counter one of my old bosses, and squeal, "Guess what I made?" One of them said I was like a crazy scientist.

I grew up loathing Power Point presentations. And so I wasn't without biblical agony that we had to keep giving them in all my classes at SVA.

In the beginning, my slides were, admittedly very simple. Coming from a very creative upbringing, I grew up thinking that presentation was no ordinary occasion.

Slides as currency

But, like it or not, slides and videos are the currency of today's digital world. It is, according to a friend of mine, a way to figure out what is going through your head or you do not exist in a vacuum.

Graduate school is an extreme in, among other things, humility and so I marked it up and improved myself, one dreadful presentation at a time. I concentrated on making my images pop by and my notes well thought out.

One time, my classmate Jeannette sat me down and made me redo all my slides for a final project in class. It was late at the evening, but I grimed my teeth, silently wished him evil thoughts and worked on the feedback that he gave.

Speaking in public was also an ordeal I learned to get over. Graduate school criticism tend to be overly, well, critical and deprived, so they are supposed to. It's easy to be wounded by comments from your professors and classmates who just want your projects to reach their full potential. I learned to take feedback with a grain of salt, listening politely and acting on the things I agreed with and ignoring those I didn't.

Toward the end of the two years, I realized something. I actually like giving talks. Showing my work tends to be interactive, each presentation I give leads to the audience doing something. I have hugged people, drawn on clouds, recited poetry and had people comply on many different occasions. It's quite fun.

I also learned to be able to do these tasks under extreme stress. Right after my thesis defense, I had to hop on a train to Connecticut to speak at TEDxNewHaven the very next day. It was a full -on 18 minutes, and still looking calm and peppy, since I had four talks to give throughout the day.

Like theater

A slide presentation is just like theater. The audience must be just as much as your talk. The times when I felt most alive while clicking through a Power Point were when the audience was manic and receptive. I would feel joyous when I saw that my work, which I did primarily out of curiosity, actually touched another human being. I learned that I didn't have to talk as though I were on a home TV shopping channel, and that I can engage the audience in an actual thoughtful conversation, slowly. I finally got out of my hermetic shell.

Finally, it is important to introduce your friends. I think that 80 percent of the work should be done before you even go onstage, and my friends have been helping silently in the background. Thankfully, I have friends who know more about styling one's hair and clothes than I do, and this will likely be something I will always entrust to them.

I suppose my department at SVA was relieved when I finally switched fully to a Mac, using Keynote instead of PowerPoint. (Actually I am, too!)

But I still hate using flashy animations.

E-mail the author at cgcsemg@gmail.com or tweet @catherine young.

A commitment to develop 'Christ-centered' leaders

By Stephen Norrie A. Padilla
Contributor

CATHOLIC schools, colleges and universities in the country remain crucial in transforming students into Christ-centered leaders to mind new challenges in a modern society.

This was affirmed by the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) as its annual assembly and convention at SMX Convention Center, SM Mall of Asia Complex, in Pasay City.

With the theme "Remember with Gratitude, Renew with Fervor," the convention included topics and issues for Catholic educational institutions.

Thousands of school leaders and administrators of the 1,348 CEAP member institutions disclosed the K to 12 program, religious education, public-private partnership in education, legal issues affecting private schools, advocacy work and transformative education, among others.

New challenges

They also discussed how Catholic schools should respond to challenges like the no-Sipid Credit policy at Polytechnic College in Bartolomeo City and the questions of academic freedom after the 102 faculty members of Ateneo de Manila University who declared their support for the reproductive health bill.

"While we celebrate the longevity of our institutions, we cannot take stock of the past and emerging contemporary challenges," said Fr. Gregorio

FR. GREGORIO Bañaga

FR. JOEL Tabora

Bañaga, C.M., outgoing CEAP president.

Bañaga also reiterated the message in the pastoral letter of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) on what the Catholic community must do as it moved toward the 500th year of Catholic education in the country.

The tasks correspond to values that CBCP calls the "four pillars." The first is to fulfill the "mission of power" —involving responsible consumerist life. Second is to bring the good news to the poor. Third is to reach out to persons who have not yet been touched by Church and joined other religious sects. And last, to awaken or reawaken in faith young people everywhere.

In the run-up to CEAP's 75th anniversary in 2014, Bañaga said, and in line with the CBCP pastoral letter,

Catholic schools should remain centers of evangelization. He said the schools were rendering invaluable service by being at the "service of educational systems in the Philippines."

The CEAP supported educational reforms being implemented by the administration of President Aquino.

Fr. Joel Tabora, S.J., chair of the UAP National Advocacy Commission, said they were in constant dialogue with the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education to help bring about reforms, such as the K to 12 basic education program.

Social problems

Apart from educational initiatives, CEAP has also been engaged in major national issues. In public statements, it based its stand on certain political and social problems plaguing the country.

It strongly opposed, for instance, suggestions to give former dictator Ferdinand Marcos a hero's burial at Libingan ng mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio in Taguig City.

Its statement read: "Let justice be the tie that binds us as a nation.... No to a hero's burial for Marcos!"

Tabora admitted that although CBCP wants to avoid controversies over national interests, it had yet to come out with a formal statement on one of today's most pressing issues: House Bill No. 4244 or "The Responsible Parenthood, Reproductive Health and Population and Development Bill."

Members of CEAP were taking too long in deliberating on the issue because of its "controversiality" and "I have to say the atmosphere where we usually meet is influenced by bishops" and "many are not sure that articulates on the provisions [of the bill]."

But he said CBCP fully supported the Catholic bishops on their official teaching against the use of the pill, even as many dissenters were being done to generate finally a unified stand on HB 4244.

As for CEAP's plans if the bill becomes a law and no solution is reached, he said the organization had already come up with modules on teaching sexuality and they were open to negotiations with authorities in setting up parameters for the subject's presentation and methodology.

Future chess masters improve their game at clinic

FOR 13 YEAR-OLD Juan Carlos Fernando, participating in the recent Art Interaction with the Masters brought him closer to his dream of becoming a chess grandmaster (GM).

The three-time sportsmeet for Filipinas Shell helped the youngster, who has been playing for games for four years, and Kristel Kimberly schooling, sharpen his skills to earn top scores in the master's level.

The one-day chess clinic held at the Power Center of SM Megamall was attended by 150 youngsters eager to learn techniques and strategies from chess masters.

Emely Segarra, ranked master by the Philippine Intercollegiate Chess Federation, and coach Cris De La Cruz, University Tuft chess team, underscored the clinic's importance.

Segarra, who was one of the instructors, said the seminar was intended to help Asian chess masters gain self-confidence, self-esteem, discipline and maturity and to foster camaraderie.

GRANDMASTER-ELECT Ronald Dableo, one of the guest experts at the Shell chess_master's young faces and students.

He said activities aimed to develop their skills in chess.

Other masters who interacted with the young players included Filipino-Australian Grandmaster (GM-elect) Ronald Dableo, and International Master (IM) Rogelio Barcia, who also coaches the Ateneo de Manila University chess team.

Chess coaches from different schools in Metro Manila also acted as mentors.

Participants learned basic moves as well as complicated techniques like the triangulation method, king and pawn endings, and different tactical and opening theories/strategy. Discovered attack and bolt. Their analytical skills were tested in various problem-solving quizzes.

The clinic also exposed them to the world of chess tournaments.

The annual tournament with the Masters is conducted annually by Filipinas Shell in line with the Department of Education's memorandum to include chess in the school curriculum to foster thinking skills and values in elementary and secondary levels.

It is a prelude to the Shell National Youth Active Chess Championship (Shell Active Chess), the nation's longest running grassroots-based chess tournament, which has two categories: Juniors (20 years old and below) and Kiddie (6, to 14-year-olds). Top finishers will compete in the grand finals later in the year.

This year's clinic was sponsored by Shell Pure Unleaded and Diesel, Shell V-Power Nitro+, Shell Fuel Oil Plus and Shell Advance Motorcycle Oil, as well as SM Supermalls and Our Home.

Since 1992, Filipinas Shell has helped thousands of youth champions through the Shell Active Chess and introduced young people to chess, providing them opportunities to improve their game moves and strategies.

DrawHappy

"IN THE HEIST of new schooling work, it's an instant happiness for a single mom like me, that my daughter knows the value of education in her young age."

Kristina L. Arado
28 years old
I human resources executive in an engineering firm in Laguna

What I was doing
I had just finished doing interviews and was screening applicants when I remembered how cute my 5-year-old daughter was while she was happily receiving her
Where I was
I was sitting in my cubicle at the human resources department a few minutes before coffee time.

New inspiring stories from 'Faces' search

STORIES of remarkable teachers will be showcased when the Inter-Island Foundation honors next month this year's winners in its The Many Faces of the Teacher search.

As in previous years, stories of perseverance, passion and faith in shaping generations of young people are expected to inspire thousands of other teachers.

It is also hoped that the search will show that stories of similar stories will share them.

The honorees, despite the odds, did more than just deliver education. They rallied communities to raise funds for classrooms, libraries, and literacy centers. They championed causes and demonstrated courage and selflessness.

Last year, The Many Faces of the Teacher honored Sofia Cajello, an Aberdeen Learning System (ALS) teacher who walks three to four hours through the mountains of Oriental Mindoro to reach her students; members of the indigenous group Mangyan.

ALS teacher said 2008 from once Jocelyn Marasigan Baybay, also of Oriental Mindoro, travels for hours and uses personal time and resources to bring education to Mangyan children. Jocelyn might see classes in basic and functional literacy.

Also an ALS teacher, Rodylla Hope Santiago of Nueva Ecija was chosen for 18 kilometers to reach out-of-school youth and adults. She goes to a camp for former Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) members in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, and hosts a Home for Girls in the same city where she counsels and mentors abused girls, motivated by her philosophy: "What you do to the least of your brothers, you do unto me."

The Cotabato Bureau of Cotabato City, a 2007 honoree, teaches lost poor and autistic students important life skills to help make them lives richer and fuller. She feeds and clothes them with minimal outside funding, relying mainly on codes from her vegetable garden.

Virginia Amancio of Aklan-sayap, Catabato, honored in 2007, is cited as a Special Education (SPED) teacher. She says children with special needs are doubly marginalized, often not a priority of public schools.

Rosebelle Ligaja Mercado, 2011 honoree, works to uplift the differently abled of Camarines Carite, through education. She says many parents do not know how to care for SPED learners. Mercado says she needs to educate the parents more than the children and help them realize there is hope for their kids.

Another 2011 honoree, Concepcion Tadifa Tababa, an ALS teacher in Tubigon, Bohol, says she read of her school has bullet holes and when she walks in her learners' house there is always a hole in the roof. She will encounter members of the New People's Army in the hallway.

Traveling from eight to 10 hours to reach her learners, Tababa says she believes the risk is worth taking.

2011 WINNER Elsa Grabio-Duran

Elsa's film of Bacacay Albay, a 2010 honoree, says his passion about inspired upon them the importance of getting an education. He teaches impoverished students in the islands.

Shaima G. Mustaqa of Lanao del Sur, 2009 honoree, relied on determination, intelligence, compassion and a clear vision to perform her task.

Another 2011 honoree, 2011 honoree Anabel Pastor Tingasal of Santa Cruz, Davao del Sur, is the first Bagobo to graduate from college. She became a teacher to help her fellow Bagobo children literacy.